

SHAPING PEACE:  
NGO ENGAGEMENT IN CIVIL WAR PEACE  
PROCESSES

By

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

“The civil society and refugee women pushed hard for a rapid end to the war. They were in regular touch with Monrovia...On one occasion, when one woman received news of a relative having been killed in Monrovia, the group of women responded by physically blockading the door to the delegates’ meeting room for several hours, locking them in and refusing to let them leave...until they came to agreements” (Hayner 2007, p. 12-13). Priscilla Hayner’s (2007) account of the 2003 Liberian peace accords in Accra, Ghana shed a positive light on the strategies and tactics of civil society actors present at the peace talks. Similarly, Hara (1999) notes the plethora of non-governmental organization (NGO) activities taking place along official Track I peace talks in Burundi. However, “private agents have certainly been eager to compensate for official diplomatic mistakes, but their initiatives, despite being widely and enthusiastically applied, not only have failed to solve the problems of communication gridlock but also have contributed to the harmful cacophony of competing, incompatible messages” (Hara 1999, p. 148). The differing analogies concerning the role of unofficial (Track II) actors in peace processes appears to be a matter of laudable heat tolerance versus crowdedness in the kitchen.<sup>1</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> “If you can’t stand the heat, get out of the kitchen” (Liberia) versus “Too many cooks in the kitchen” (Burundi)

contrasting depictions raise the following questions: *Is there a systematic impact of nongovernmental organizations on the creation of sustainable peace following a civil war? Do coordination and partnerships among domestic and international NGOs and with Track I mediators positively impact peace processes? Is the timing of the intervention significant? What is the impact on local civil society groups as highly-funded international NGOs move into peace negotiations?*

Despite a dearth in cross-national data and quantitative studies on the role of Track II actors in peace negotiations, the conflict management and resolution literature suggests that NGOs can ripen a conflict for successful management attempts (Jessop et al 2008), facilitate dialogue between disputants (Garb and Nan 2006), and contribute to a post-conflict environment that supports implementation of a peace agreement (Persbo 2010). Looking at organizations specifically devoted to peace and conflict resolution (P/CRO), Gidron et al (2002) assert that such groups make three unique contributions to build peace. First, P/CROs attempt to shape public opinion through advocacy and strategic activism. Second, the organizations typically make an attempt to bridge divides and “reach out to the enemy” while engaging in conscience-raising activities.

In a qualitative survey of 25 conflict negotiations around the globe from 1992 to 2004, Wanis-St. John and Kew (2008) find a strong correlation between the inclusion of civil society actors in peace talks and a sustained peace agreement. According to their analysis, conflict negotiations that excluded civil society actors from the bargaining table experienced a cold peace or renewal of violence (with the lone exception of the Dayton Accords in 1995). Böhmelt (2010b) argues that the increased leverage and resources available to “Track 1.5” diplomatic strategies (conflict management attempts that involve

both “official” state actors and “informal” actors) generally overcome the coordination problems outlined in the Burundi case above. His large-n study—the only one tangentially related to this phenomenon, to my knowledge—finds support for his theory, though Track 1 actors are likely to achieve successful outcomes on their own.

The connection between an expansive coalition of actors during peace negotiations and their impact on sustained agreements constitutes a broad research agenda with several subsets including the dimensions of the conflict environment (Crocker et al 2005; Diehl and Druckman 2009), mediation context and processes (Bercovitch and Houston 2000; Crocker et al 1999; Kydd 2006), and institutional provisions within the peace agreement itself that shape the post-conflict environment (Walter 2002; Svensson 2009). This thesis investigates the cross-national impact of NGO involvement during and after peace agreements. A secondary proposition concerns the behavior of civil society groups during peace talks—is there anything unique about their actions that would conceivably lead to a sustainable peace? I posit that the connections domestic civil society actors establish with international nongovernmental organizations enhance their participation and influence in a peace process. Focusing my analysis in this manner allows me to synthesize the subfields of conflict mediation and make a substantive contribution to the literature examining the determinants of mediation outcomes.

I endeavor to make a two-fold contribution to the academic and practitioner communities with this thesis. First, I have found only one quantitative study (Böhmelt 2010b) that considers the impact of informal actors on the peace process. I build on Böhmelt’s (2010b) theory to develop a measure of civil society engagement in the peace



process and derive additional hypotheses that are qualitatively tested. Additionally, I contribute to the qualitative investigations of this topic through a most similar systems structured case comparison of peace processes in Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka. Adapting Keck and Sikkink's (1998) theory of transnational and domestic NGO partnerships to change state behavior, I specifically focus on the relationships, resources and institutional structures available to Track II actors as they attempt to influence peace outcomes. Given the explosive growth of NGOs over the past few decades, my study holds relevance for policy-makers as well. Generalizable assessments concerning the impact of NGOs can guide strategies for individual conflicts while my qualitative investigation yields insights regarding paths for increased cooperation and coordination among Track I and Track II actors.

This thesis proceeds as follows. Chapter Two provides an overview of the several branches of literature germane to this research question. I identify actors, dynamics and institutions that influence outcomes throughout the entire peace process (during armed hostilities, attempts at conflict management and in the especially vulnerable periods of peace agreement implementation). Civil society actors, especially international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), interact with these forces to play a role in peace outcomes. Since part of my theory suggests that domestic and international NGOs can amplify their impact through collaboration, I outline the literature on Transnational Advocacy Networks and empirical findings concerning TANs' impact on support for human rights within formerly repressive regimes. Chapter Three develops my theoretical story detailing how and when I envision NGOs affecting peace outcomes. I argue that NGO involvement in the peace process provides additional leverage, information,

representation, and assurance to skeptical or vulnerable participants (and the wider citizenry) during and after negotiations. As in the case of Burundi (Hara 1999), mitigating factors such as low state capacity, coordination problems or conflicting domestic and international NGO agendas may complicate my expected relationship between levels of INGO involvement and peace outcomes. Examining these opposing theoretical expectations in depth, I devise a four step process of domestic and international civil society partnership to influence state actors (and non-state disputants) during and after peace negotiations. Chapter Four details my research design. I adopt a qualitative approach and employ a most similar systems design to assess the impact of INGO membership levels in a country on conflict outcomes. INGO membership levels in a country does not necessarily translate into high Track II involvement in peace negotiations, but since my theory is based on the human and social capital provided by domestic and international NGOs during the peace process, I argue that this is an acceptable variable to consider during case selection. I draw on the literature covered in chapter two to find relevant control variables to make the cases as similar as possible. I qualitatively investigate the conflicts in Aceh, Indonesia; Mindanao, Philippines; and Sri Lanka in Chapter Five. Specifically, I cite evidence of civil society activities in each of those peace processes and evaluate their impact on the conflict outcome. In Chapter Six, I synthesize the findings of my quantitative investigations and underscore both the academic contribution and policy implications of my study. I conclude with a summary of my findings and suggestions for further research.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature most germane to this thesis spans scholarship regarding the causes of conflict and conflict management responses by the international community. Within the conflict management literature, the impact of mediation on peace outcomes is most closely examined. Consider Figure 1 as a brief illustration of how these disparate branches of the literature interact to set the stage for my theory concerning the role of civil society actors in peace negotiations. Quantitative and qualitative findings from the cited studies inform my hypotheses concerning the impact of these actors and underscore alternative causal variables that are prudent to control for in my empirical investigation.

#### *Patterns within and Causes of Conflict, 1946-2009*

Patterns in war type and the location of conflict have shifted dramatically since the end of World War II and, when combined with systemic characteristics of the time period, have motivated new responses by the international community to war. The majority of the 232 conflicts since 1946 have been intra-state in nature (Gleditsch et al 2002). Zones of conflict exists in Central and South America, a second in Eastern Europe and the Middle East and a third spanning the African continent (Gleditsch et al 2002). Regardless of time period, type or location, Diehl (2006) disaggregates war into four basic phases: 1) Initiation, 2) War Dynamics, 3) Escalation and

**Figure 1: Conflict Processes and Determinants of Peace**

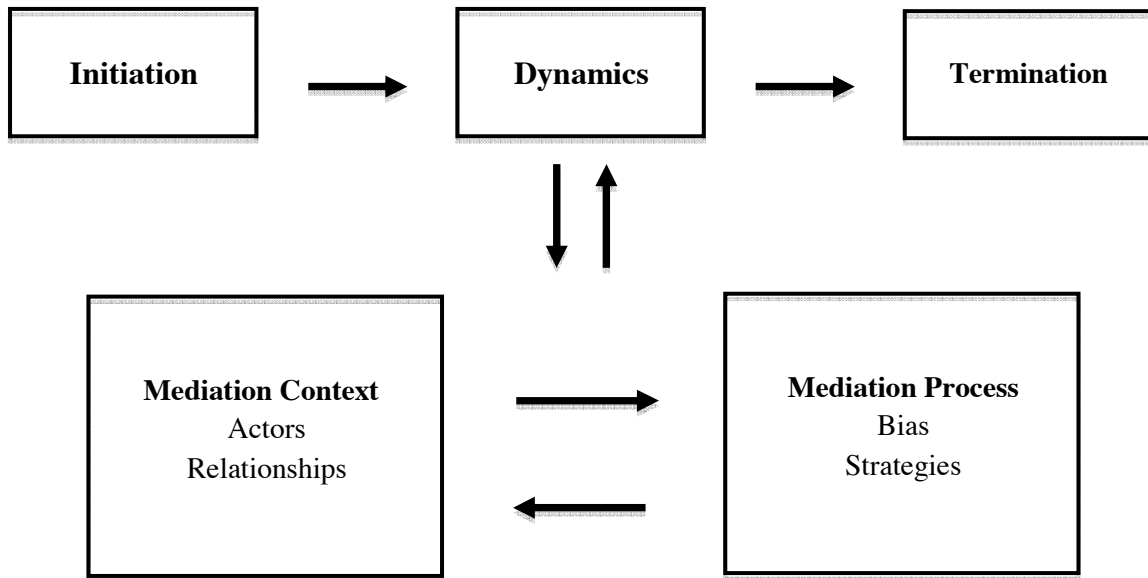


Figure 1 Sources: Bercovitch et al 1991, p. 11 and Diehl 2006

4) Post-War. The conflict management literature reveals that actors, events and interventions at various stages of conflict interact to influence post-war outcomes.

Scholarship investigating the cause of war spans theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches. Rational choice theorists such as Fearon (1995) posit that war is a function of asymmetric or misinterpreted information, commitment problems and issue indivisibilities. While this widely-held theory perhaps explains the outbreak of violence, it abstracts away from the concrete issues of conflict that play a huge part in specific conflict escalations and settlements. Motivations for fighting that appear in Diehl's (2006) initiation and escalation phases may evolve over time as the conflict deepens and becomes more intractable (Crocker et al 2005). For example, reporters and foreign policy scholars alike have thoroughly documented the Bush administration's shift away from finding weapons of mass destruction in Iraq toward promoting human rights

as evidence supporting the former justification failed to materialize (Shannon and Keller 2007). Diehl (1992, p. 333) notes the traditional national and systemic variables thought to promote war—regime type, arms races, polarity, etc.—before underscoring the often-neglected importance of issue salience. Fighting for control over territory or the executive branch influences the intractability, severity, and duration of a conflict that, as the following discussion illustrates, has a marked influence on peace outcomes. Turning to the focus of this thesis—intra-state conflict—the key causal explanation for civil war rests within Collier and Hoeffler’s (2004) “greed and grievance” model for predicting the outbreak of violence. According to their thesis, intra-state war is motivated by 1) disparities within society along economic, political or ethnic and religious lines and/or 2) the incentive and opportunity for rebel groups to organize—either taking advantage of a weak security apparatus for political gain or to exploit the natural resources of a state (Collier and Hoeffler 2004). Daxecker (2011, p. 29) builds on this theory by illustrating how “shocks to state capabilities” such as an economic recession or changes in systemic polarities increase the risk of civil war. Given the impressive costs of civil war borne by the most vulnerable of civilians and the spillover effects across borders and into other issue areas—environmental and public health crises, for example—international efforts at conflict prevention, management and reconciliation have spiked in recent decades (Dayton 2004).

### ***International Conflict Management***

“Unlike traditional approaches to security management, such as collective defense or collective security, which involve formal obligations to undertake joint action in response to the actions of an aggressive state, today’s cooperative ventures seem to

involve improvised strategies of collective action, often in response to one or more of a wide array of diverse security challenges [spanning] ‘traditional’...and ‘non-traditional’ threats such as organized crime, piracy, kidnapping...” (Crocker et al 2011, p. 39).

Carnevale and Pruitt (1992) find four mechanisms of conflict settlement: 1) struggle, 2) negotiation, 3) mediation and 4) adjudication. Of the four, negotiation and mediation distribute the preponderance of dispute resolution power in a relatively more equitable fashion than either struggle (in which the more powerful power achieves victory or the war fizzles into a costly deadlock) or adjudication (in which power is delegated to a third party to determine the conflict outcome) (Carnevale and Pruitt 1992). Bercovitch et al (1997) add another dimension to the conflict management matrix by considering the number of parties present to settle the conflict. That is, conflicts can be settled unilaterally, bilaterally or through the inclusion of a third party (who could still engage in any of the four Carnevale and Pruitt (1992) options). International adjudication is perhaps the least frequently employed of Carnevale and Pruitt’s (1992) strategies because of the attachments to and concerns about the erosion of state sovereignty by placing decision-making power in an international legal body (Babbitt and Hampson 2011). Negotiation is frequently used in several issue areas, especially in economic and trade discussions between countries; however, in the case of actual war, a third-party is often needed to facilitate dialogue between disputants. To that end, mediation is one of the most successful and most frequently used forms of dispute resolution not only in inter- and intra-state conflicts, but also in ancient Mesopotamian land disputes and modern employment discrimination cases (Carnevale and Pruitt 1992). As I elaborate further, this form of conflict management interacts heavily with conflict environment and bears

significant influence on the dispute outcome. First, however, it is prudent to clarify the conceptual challenges surrounding the idea of “success” in conflict management and settlement.

“Whereas general conflict resolution focuses on seeking long-term remedies that address the root causes of conflict and all underlying issues, interventions in crises have a distinct mission...to terminate the immediate crisis before it escalates or spreads” (Wilkenfeld et al 2003, p. 281-282). Stern and Druckman (2000) caution against setting unrealistic expectations prior to a conflict interposition—lofty or miscommunicated expectations for a third-party intervention can quickly backfire among domestic audiences of the intervener and the local population of the targeted state. Babbitt and Hampson (2011) find a dichotomy in the conflict resolution literature between studies of “conflict transformation” and “conflict settlement.” In connecting theory and practice, Babbitt and Hampson (2011) argue that the strategy and method of intervention should follow the goal. The main takeaway point for academics (and this study) is the need to delineate goals and time horizons when analyzing the success or failure of a particular peace process. To that end, Klein et al (2008) develop a peace scale indicating the nature of inter-state relationships that are not actively engaged in war. The scale between rivalry, negative peace and positive peace is a function of levels of conflict, communication, and agreement between a country-dyad. Although their scale characterizes inter-state behavior, the same logic applies within states as well—tensions between the government and opposition parties or rebel groups can wax and wane over time. In terms of the impact of civil society groups on peace outcomes, I argue that they

push the conflict towards positive peace, not merely the end of armed hostilities between disputants (Wanis-St. John and Kew 2008).

*Dynamics of the Conflict Environment and the Impact of Intervention*

The dynamics of the conflict environment not only predict the likelihood of success for conflict management attempts, but also correlate strongly with the degree of civil society involvement in peace negotiations. In their overview of the elements of a conflict that influence chances for a peaceful settlement, Diehl and Druckman (2009) identify three levels of the environment that interact to produce or prevent the success of mediation: characteristics of the conflict, local governance, and local population. The type of conflict, inter- or intra-state, and the issues at stake are indicators of conflict intractability. Civil wars are notoriously difficult to resolve peacefully as the sheer number of disputants (often adopting guerrilla, leaderless tactics) mean that the number of “spoilers” to peace negotiations is typically greater than in disputes between states. Motivations behind war are typically depicted in dichotomous terms: control of the government or territory (Uppsala Conflict Data Program 2008a). Disputants typically hold strong emotional or economic attachment to territory in secessionist movements; consequently, it is harder to exchange this connection with side payments or issue linkage (Diehl and Druckman 2009). The involvement of foreign powers in an intra-state war further complicates peace calculations. The intervention of a major power on behalf of a combatant group, however, may present enough leverage to compel peace (Diehl and Druckman 2009). However, the strategic calculations needed to achieve the peace most satisfactory to the intervening power may run counter to civil society objectives, for example, for free and fair post-conflict elections. Geopolitical factors such as border



permeability and location of natural resources or disputed territory also influence the tractability of a conflict and the likelihood of success facing an intervening party (Diehl and Druckman 2009).

Central to the discussion surrounding conflict characteristics and intractability is the notion of intervention timing. Greig (2001) finds that early intervention in a dispute between rivals contributes to short term peace, but long-term peace is more associated with later interventions, after the disputants have had a chance to determine the true cost of maintaining the rivalry. Scholars of “ripeness theory” posit that conflict phases present windows of opportunity in which conflicts are amenable to settlement. Zartman (2001) declares that ripeness is a function of two perceptions among the disputants. Warring groups must perceive that they are locked in a “mutually hurting stalemate” with each other *and* view peace negotiations as a potential for a way out of the conflict. Mutually hurting stalemates without the second element increase the likelihood that disputants use the “time out” at the bargaining table to replenish arms and soldiers in order to win decisively at a later point in time. Through day to day activities pushing for peace, mediators and especially civil society actors can help create conditions of ripeness (Jessop et al 2008). For example, the Inter-religious Council of Sierra Leone played an instrumental role in convincing the disputants and wider civilian population of the costs of continuing to fight (Jessop et al 2008, p. 100). Additionally, the Council pursued conversations with leaders of rebel groups and established ties with one another, facilitating dialogue.

“The success of any peace operation, especially a peacebuilding mission, is somewhat dependent on the degree to which it can draw upon the resources, capacity, and

support of key actors in the host state” (Diehl and Druckman 2009, p. 19). Sullivan and Gartner (2006) find that regime type of the initiating state in a conflict is a strong predictor of dispute escalation and conflict outcome. Democracies are not only more likely to achieve their objectives without employing force, but also more likely to select out of disputes by making concessions to their opponent (Sullivan and Gartner 2006).

The ability of a state to maintain control of its security forces and provide some semblance of public services during a civil war is a strong indicator of the survival chances of a state after the conflict (Goldstone 2008). That is, what barriers to state failure are available to mediators and disputants? The economic health of a country, possession of natural resources and a well-developed public infrastructure alleviate pressures on a newly formed post-conflict government. Additionally, characteristics of the local population influence chances for a durable peace. What cleavages are present in society? Demographics such as the state’s population, population density and level of human capital are also influential (Diehl and Druckman 2009). Civil society actors of course influence the mobilization potential of a population as they provide leadership and facilitate dialogue among like-minded civilians (Jenkins 1983). Additionally, Lipset (1994, p. 12-13) notes that “Civil organizations reduce resistance to unanticipated changes because they prevent the isolation of political institutions from the polity and can smooth over, or at least recognize, interest differences early on.” In the context of conflict negotiations, a strong civil society can “sell” a specific peace accord to a war-weary public (Wanis-St. John and Kew 2008).

The empirical record for various types of third-party conflict intervention—namely peacekeeping and mediation—leads to conflicting policy recommendations.

Nonetheless, it is useful to briefly compare a few findings concerning mediation in “tough” cases and peacekeeping interventions (which, arguably, can be more severe or intractable than conflicts that are mediated only) (Rost and Greig 2011). Diehl and Bercovitch (1997) pose a “difficult test” for mediation effectiveness by assessing its impact on rivalry relationships. They find that mediation has neither a significant impact on preventing conflict between rivals nor on the severity of militarized interstate disputes. Given that a rivalry relationship, by definition, characterizes an intractable conflict, mediation’s dismal record is quite understandable. Regan (2002) focuses his investigation on civil wars, but considers the impact of third party “intervention” (which may or may not be more coercive and involved than mediation alone). Like Diehl and Bercovitch’s (1997) findings concerning mediation in rivalries, Regan (2002) deems third-party military and economic intervention in a civil conflict a poor tool for those interests in shortening the life of the dispute. Interacting one type of intervention—peacekeeping—on prospects for mediation success in that same dispute, Greig and Diehl (2006) reach similarly pessimistic conclusions. Interacting mediation with the presence of peacekeepers foreshadows a branch of the literature most concerned with elements of the conflict that most impact mediation outcomes while raising awareness of possible selection effects within those cases.

### ***Mediation as a Tool of Conflict Management***

Scholars of mediation have struggled to develop a universal definition of mediation that encompasses the constitutive elements of the process. Nevertheless, a general consensus has emerged supporting Bercovitch et al.’s (1991, p. 8) definition of mediation as a “process of conflict management where disputants seek the assistance of,

or accept an offer of help from, an individual, group, state or organization to settle their conflict or resolve their differences without resorting to physical force or involving the authority of the law.” The last phrase, “involving the authority of the law” underscores the constraints upon mediators during peace negotiations—settlement authority lies firmly in the hands of the disputants. Perhaps the best way for a mediator to exercise power is in its soft form: getting the disputants to want what the mediator wants (peace) discreetly (Lukes 2004). As the discussion below elaborates, mediators have a number of tools available to entice or coerce disputants to agreement. General studies of mediation aggregate these approaches and tactics to consider the big picture impact on dispute resolution.

The biggest question scholars have posed concerning mediation is whether it has any impact at all. Are mediated conflicts any more likely to experience peace than non-mediated conflicts? Theoretical treatments of mediation most frequently take a benevolent view. Mediation can help each side achieve an acceptable minimum of its conflict goals through compensation for concessions. Additionally, time spent at the bargaining table facilitates dialogue and mutual understanding that enable the combatants to address the root causes of their disagreement. A more cynical view of this process argues that mediation simply provides a scapegoat in the third party, whereby disputants can make concessions while deflecting domestic audience costs. Focusing on interstate crises, Wilkenfeld et al (2003) use data from the International Crisis Behavior project to demonstrate that mediation has a positive impact on the reduction of tensions between disputants and contributes to long-term peace. While 38 percent of all interstate crises end in agreement, mediated crises boast a 62 percent success rate (Wilkenfeld et al 2003).

However, Wilkenfeld et al (2003) note that international crises experience the most frequent offers of mediation. Perhaps the sudden eruption of interstate tensions catches the full attention of the international community and compels other powers to break out the biggest tools in their conflict management toolbox, before the situation escalates or widens to a regional crisis.

The swift and powerful reaction of other states during an interstate crisis conceivably multiplies the effectiveness of mediation. But how effective is mediation in long-simmering disputes, such as those surrounding intra-state ethnic or religious rivalries. Bercovitch and Fretter (2007) find that 52 percent of mediations attempting to settle ethnic-cultural disputes are unsuccessful. Thinking about conflict in general and abstracting away from the specific motivations for fighting, Gartner and Bercovitch (2006) maintain that mediators take the hard cases. This selection effect builds the expectation that mediated settlements are short-lived compared to disputes that are settled without the assistance of a third party. However, given the emphasis on facilitation, communication and reconciliation during the mediation process, it seems equally plausible that mediated settlements endure in the long-term. Gartner and Bercovitch (2006) conclude that the opposing force that finally wins out in a dispute (the selection effect or the process effect) depends upon the strategy of the mediator. Facilitating communications involves the least effort on the part of the mediator, and is unlikely to alter the underlying nature of a dispute and generate durable agreements.

On the other hand, when a mediator is more heavily involved and expends greater resources, settlements are more likely to remain in force” (Gartner and Bercovitch 2006, p. 835). Their finding illustrates how the context of the negotiations influences

settlement duration. Other variables include the power and type of mediator(s) and their previous interactions with the disputants, as well as approaches (such as facilitative / communicative, procedural, or directive) that the mediator employs over the course of negotiations.

### *Mediation Context*

The context of peace negotiations—particularly the characteristics of the mediator—typically direct the course of civil society engagement in the peace process. Activists can demand a seat at the bargaining table and access to disputants, but the mediator (as well as the combatants themselves) possesses considerable leverage over whether Track II objectives are sincerely considered.

Bercovitch and Gartner (2006) identify five types of mediators: individuals, states, regional organizations, international institutions and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs). While states are the most frequent type of mediator, the literature identifies a number of institutions and groups who serve as mediators with some actors, such as regional peacekeeping organizations and civil society groups, rising in prominence in the post-Cold War World. Parallel paths alongside official mediation provide new opportunities for informal communication between disputants and open the window for conflict resolution (Davies and Kaufman 2002; Agha et al 2003; Kaye 2001). Böhmelt (2011) quantitatively investigates the impact of multi-party mediation—a frequent, but under examined phenomenon. He finds an inverted U-shape between the size of mediating coalitions and effectiveness (in terms of reaching a full settlement of the conflict). That is to say, a medium-size coalition of mediators is more likely to achieve a peaceful settlement than either a lone mediator or a

large group of actors. Bercovitch and Kadayifci-Orellana (2009) note the growth in nongovernmental mediating parties and the dearth of scholarship concerning faith-based actors in this process. Conditioned upon the disputants and nature of the conflict, Bercovitch and Kadayifci-Orellana (2009) argue that religious organizations convey a different type of legitimacy to and leverage over the peace negotiations. This influence can have dramatic impact as their examples from Quaker involvement in the Nigeria, the Inter-Religious Council in Sierra Leone, and the Community of Sant'Egidio in Mozambique attest.

Most studies tie the institution mediating a dispute to the likelihood of a peaceful settlement. For example, Hansen et al (2008) suggest that highly institutionalized, highly democratic international organizations that possess the capability for binding settlement will be the most effective for conflict resolution. Likewise, Kelman (2006) envisions an “International Facilitating Service” that is “interactive, facilitated, nonbinding, confidential, exploratory, and problem-solving”—a complete conflict resolution machine (p. 213). Other scholars, such as Edward Azar, put stock in Track II negotiations and civil society actors to “ripen” a conflict for settlement. (Pruitt 1997; Davies and Kaufman 2002; Agha et al 2003; Crocker et al 2005). Böhmelt’s (2010b) study supports this claim through quantitative investigation of integrated Tracks I and II diplomatic strategies and their impact on reaching a full settlement in peace negotiations. Wanis-St. John and Kew (2008) tout the benefits of inclusion of civil society actors in peace negotiations through cross-national comparisons of 25 conflicts during the 1990s through 2004—civil society inclusion is strongly correlated with lasting peace outcomes.

The power and resources available to the parties strongly determine the choices mediators' employ (and reactions of the disputants). Bercovitch and Jackson (2009) discuss the behavioral differences between large mediating states and small mediating states. Large states frequently use their mediating leverage to promote or protect their interests while smaller states, such as Algeria, Norway and Switzerland, build their reputation as fair, impartial brokers (Bercovitch and Jackson 2009, p. 39).

Turning to power disparities between rivals, Greig (2005) finds that evenly divided power plays in role in requesting mediation among disputants, but does not factor into considerations a mediating state makes when offering its services. In unequally divided disputes, Albin (1999) finds that weak parties are more likely to resort to ethical arguments during bargaining and implementation of agreements to leverage the power disparity. Her case study of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) indicates that, because Israel possessed the economic and military strength to ensure their interests in deliberations over water rights, the PLO demanded capitulations by the Israelis over their conceptions of justice and fairness during the implementation of the agreement. Returning to Beardsley and Greig's (2009) theory of "bargaining barriers", Beardsley (2009, p. 272) argues that the same barriers to peace—domestic audience costs, high levels of conflict, credibility problems—can be used to at least one disputants' advantage in leveraging power over the mediator and "stalling."

While scholars (Gartner and Bercovitch 2006; Greig 2005) have discussed selection effects in mediation, Melin and Svensson (2009) note another dynamic at play to explain the incidence of mediation (and give a hint as to how the settlement plays out). They suggest that, because mediation may convey legitimacy to non-state actors in civil



wars, sovereign parties are less likely to accept an offer of mediation. They find that this is indeed the case: while rebel groups more frequently seek mediation in an attempt to gain legitimacy, these potential recognition costs prevent a government embroiled in a civil war from accepting an offer of mediation until they expect that they cannot settle the dispute themselves.

The historical and political ties between mediator and disputants have been explored at length in the literature (Greig and Regan 2008; Greig 2005; Bercovitch and Houston 2000; Melin and Svensson 2009). Summing up these studies, Greig and Regan (2008) find a positive relationship between the historical and political ties a third party has with parties in a civil war and offers of mediation; however, this turns into an inverse relationship when it comes to disputants' acceptance.

Crescenzi et al (2010) develop a top-down approach of third party mediation based upon systemic variables. Levels of democracy and institutions in the international system drive disputing parties to seek mediation (Mitchell 2002). Crescenzi et al (2005, p.1) offer the flip side of this argument: "By increasing the supply of credible mediators, global movements toward a strong democratic community increase the likelihood that potential mediators will intervene in contentious conflicts."

The onset of mediation can be explained by the type of conflict and ensuing cost-benefit equilibrium between the disputants and mediator based upon historical and political ties between the parties. However, overall levels of democratic institutions and norms drive up the incidences of mediation (Crescenzi et al 2005). The material and cultural factors that drive mediators to offer intervention are often the same forces that lead disputants to reject such an offer. However, in cases where mediation occurs, these

factors, in conjunction with the context of negotiations and other characteristics of the mediator, shape the approach a mediator takes in terms of impartiality or bias.

### *Mediation Process*

As with the characteristics of the mediator, the strategies they choose to employ over the course of the negotiations strongly impact the likelihood that civil society actors will be heard. The literature typically classifies mediator behavior into three categories: 1) communicative-facilitative, 2) procedural and 3) directive (Bercovitch and Gartner 2006). This taxonomy is a spectrum reflecting the mediator's engagement in and commitment to conflict negotiations in terms of time, risk and resources.

Communicative-facilitative strategies are the least intensive to the mediator(s) as their primary duty is to provide and transmit information to the disputants. Procedural strategies give a mediator more control over the agenda and schedule of peace negotiations while directive strategies feature a mediator attempting to change the peace calculus in the bargaining room by offer incentives (or threats) for the disputants to come to agreement. As mediators employ more directive strategies, the inclusion of civil society actors is encouraged to the degree that such inclusion suits the mediator's interest in the conflict outcome.

Tactics that mediators employ are fluid and not mutually exclusive. As elaborated below, choice of which of these strategies to employ is not only related to the context of the conflict, but also a function of mediator capabilities, reputation, and perceptions of bias or impartiality. The combination of these factors interacts to influence peace outcomes, the empirical record of which is additionally discussed below.

Wilkenfeld et al (2003) suggests that mediators who adopt manipulative strategies are more successful in their efforts than are those who constrain themselves with a more facilitative approach. One of the key tools at a mediator's disposal is the ability to control who is at the table and whose voice is heard the loudest (McClintock and Nahimana 2008; Wanis-St. John 2008; Zartman 2008). Wanis-St. John (2008, p. 4) cites two opposing needs facing a mediator: "the need to produce negotiations that include the minimum number of factions/ participants required to get agreement [reduce the number of "spoilers" at the table] and the need to create the broadest possible support among the population and political parties for a peace process."

The importance given to perceptions of mediator impartiality has waxed and waned over time (Calvert 1986; Smith 1994; Kydd 2003; Rauchhaus 2006; Kydd 2006; Favretto 2009) with recent scholarship (Kydd 2006; Favretto 2009) settling on the notion that sometimes biased intervention is an effective tool for conflict management (a biased mediator will enforce peace settlements by military means). The crux of this argument about biased mediators rests with the credibility the mediator has in the eyes of its prodigy and opposition—the information biased mediators transmits to its favored party is more likely to be seen as credible, therefore, biased mediators can be counted on to deliver a disputant for costly concessions to reach agreement (or at the least, avoid a breakdown in talks and renewed fighting) (Maoz and Terris 2006).

Smith (1994) suggests the level of coercion in a mediation process predicts the level of success a biased strategy will have. In providing private information, Rauchhaus (2006) finds that both biased and unbiased mediators can be effective. A final debate concerning mediation strategies and effectiveness concerns transparent versus secret

negotiations (Putnam and Carcasson 1997; Wall, Jr. et al 2001). Wall, Jr. et al (2001) suggests that highly visible mediators and negotiations enjoy a greater rate of success. However, Ramirez's theory of audience costs argues that private negotiations insulate a leader from domestic punishments in response to his or her concessions.

For practitioners, cross-cultural negotiation experiences comprise one of the most important skills attainable (Mediator's Toolkit 2009). Ramsbotham (2005) provides an overview of the scholastic debate concerning the normative extent cultural considerations should factor into mediation processes. In hierarchical fashion, the debate precedes as follows: "1) Cultural variation is not relevant to conflict resolution; 2) Cultural variation should be taken into account in conflict resolution, but only as a variable; 3) Cultural variation is fundamentally significant in conflict resolution and 4) Cultural variation reaches right to the bottom, precluding cross-cultural generalization" (Ramsbotham et al 2005, p. 307). Tying into mediator tactics, Bercovitch and Houston (2000) suggest that culturally sensitive negotiations enhance opportunities for full peace. Additionally, mediator recognition of the unique cultural characteristics of civil society activists minimizes confusion and allows these groups to make more contributions to the peace process.

The attributes of the mediator, such as the training they've received and their ideology, play a role in selecting tactics and strategies for negotiations (Wall, Jr. et al 2001). While not exactly a typology suitable for systematic study of mediations, McDonald (1996, p. 323-325) relies on personal experience to offer a general (and sometimes critical) view of the average American negotiator, offering that they are impatient, arrogant, poor listeners, culturally insular, legalistic, naïve, friendly, fair,

flexible, and innovative. Again, there is difficulty in examining these characteristics as generalizable across mediated conflicts; however, the perceptual influences of these attributes are ripe for constructivist analysis. State-level variation among mediating states affects both the offer to mediate and subsequent decisions to inscribe the negotiations with moralism (Touval 2003).

Broad consensus in the literature regarding disputants' effects on mediation styles centers around past interactions with the mediating party and involvement in mediation generally (Wall, Jr. et al 2001; Bercovitch and Houston 2000). For example, mediators are more likely to rely on humor or other ice-breaking mechanisms when inter-party trust is low (Wall, Jr. et al 2001). Past and current ties with the mediator, such as political or economic alliances, influence both the onset of mediation and (most importantly) the perceptions of impartiality and legitimacy, if not the actual levels of impartiality and credibility (Bercovitch and Houston 2000).

A critical debate in the literature surrounding mediation strategies concerns timing effects (Wall, Jr. and Druckman 2003; Wall, Jr. et al 2001; Beardsley 2008; Mahieu 2007). Wall, Jr. et al (2001) suggest that time constraints combined with potential losses to the mediators from a failed resolution prompts more frequent and more pressing tactics to settle the dispute. However, adopting a broader view of mediation than Bercovitch and Jackson (2009), Wall, Jr. and Druckman (2003) include peacekeeping missions in their analysis and posit that time constraints mask differences in mediation approaches between severe and non-severe disputes. For example, there should be no difference in the number of mediation techniques applied to a non-severe conflict with no time constraints and a severe dispute under time pressure. Empirical analysis does not support

the Wall, Jr. and Druckman (2003) hypothesis—the severity of the conflict overshadows any effects of time pressures. Mahieu (2007) tackles this debate from another angle and suggests that the timing of a ceasefire implementation is critical to its enduring success. She concludes that mediators affected by costs of a failed settlement are best served in developing consensus among warring parties regarding how to approach political issues driving the conflict and then quickly implementing a ceasefire before proceeding with negotiations (p. 224).

### ***Post-Conflict Implementation and Durability of Peace Agreements***

So far this thesis has discussed literature germane to explaining the interaction between conflict dynamics and mediation processes and the subsequent impact on peace outcomes. While these factors are crucial for enticing disputants reach an agreement in the first place, the post-conflict environment and implementation of the peace accord is a “treacherous transition period” (Rothchild 2002, p. 3). Peace accords are especially susceptible to fail and fighting to renew during this time because of uncertainties about the intentions of the disputants and third-party actors (Favretto 2009; Walter 2002).

State capacity, specific elements of peace agreements such as transitional justice mechanisms, political power-sharing arrangements and third party security guarantees, and a sustained commitment to post-conflict economic development heavily influence the prospects for success or failure of peace accords (DeRouen et al 2010; Mukherjee 2006; Svensson 2009; Walter 2002). Again, domestic civil society and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) play a critical role in pushing the post-conflict environment towards sustained peace.

One mechanism that intensifies the efforts of these Track II actors is their use of Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANs). The synergy created by these partnerships constitutes the logical underpinnings of my theoretical explanation for the “peace impact” of domestic civil society and INGOs at every stage of a conflict. Briefly, I argue in the next chapter that the level of INGO involvement in a conflict-ridden state matters very much to the onset of conflict management attempts such as mediation, the participation of local and international “peace and conflict resolution” groups in negotiations, and the duration of peace.

### *State Capacity*

Civil war is often thought of as a cause or consequence of state failure—the loss of a government’s legitimacy and effectiveness to provide public services, especially security. This measure of state capacity illustrates the resources available to civil society groups and the challenges that may arise in achieving their goals. This measure additionally serves as a potential agenda setting function for these groups as they engage in the peace process—perhaps the first goal is to end the fighting, then to focus on economic recovery before turning to human rights protections, for example.

Goldstone (2008) identifies five pathways to state failure: 1) escalating ethnic conflicts, 2) state predation, 3) regional guerilla rebellion, 4) democratic collapse and 4) succession or reform crises in authoritarian states. The instability of a fragile or failing state in the wake of a civil war damage prospects for the implementation and longevity of peace agreements as regional or domestic actors will step in to fill the power-vacuum, triggering renewed violence. The institutional failure of state agencies may also create spillover effects like public health crises that dampen implementation and economic

development efforts. This idea of the ability of a state to provide services (with or without perceived legitimacy among its citizens) is known as “state capacity” (Arnold 1989; DeRouen et al 2010). DeRouen et al (2010) argue that “as state capacity increases, strong states should be better capable of successful implementation and would require very little-direct third-party intervention and implementation to ensure a successful outcome. In contrast, as state capacity declines, the need for a third party increases...When the state is incapable of carrying out even the simplest of tasks, third parties should act as a surrogate of the state and work to ensure that implementation is achieved” (p. 336). They find that while intervention can help weak states implement peace agreements, in cases of very low state capacity, such as Somalia and Burundi, the willingness of third parties to contribute to implementation is not enough to supplant the havoc wrecked by an anarchic environment (DeRouen et al 2010). Goldstone (2005) implores third parties intervening in low-capacity / failing states to first determine whether the state suffers from low legitimacy, low effectiveness or both and then tailor assistance accordingly. Elections, security assistance and strategic allocation of foreign aid can help shift states back to the right path; INGOs and local civil society groups can also enhance the effectiveness of this Track I assistance from the international community (Van Tongeren et al 2005).

### *Post-Conflict Economic Development*

Economic development in a post-conflict state, under the right conditions, can facilitate growth in state capacity through increased revenue, autonomy from donor agencies, and job opportunities for citizens. Unfortunately, Woodward (2002) asserts that the detrimental effects of civil war on a state’s economic trajectory are permanent—economic conditions usually worsen after a civil war and they are subject to slower



growth than countries that did not experience a civil war. Despite this unhappy trend, economic revitalization is crucial to building confidence in the peace process and implementation of specific institutions within peace agreements. The provision of government services must also be equitable to all segments of the population for the peace to hold up over the long term.

Two strategies guide economic development in post-war states. One involves NGOs and civilian forces to deploy aid and humanitarian relief rapidly. While the effects of this strategy are felt immediately, the transition to development strategies slows or is non-existent due to path dependence and organizational self-interest (Woodward 2002). The second strategy is most frequently employed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and attempts to encourage foreign direct investment by imposing conditions on loans that supposedly ameliorate investor concerns about inflation and corruption (Woodward 2002). Coordination problems and rigidities in conditionality policies of the International Financial Institutions frequently mitigate positive benefits of assistance to these societies. And, unlike other realms where increased INGO involvement bolsters local actor activities and increases the likelihood for sustained peace, in terms of economic development, INGOs may be part of the problem because they divert funds away from state agencies and local groups (Woodward 2002).

### *Institutions within Peace Agreements*

Peace settlements frequently move beyond ceasefires to immediately end armed hostilities and instead attempt a comprehensive agreement that addresses the root causes of conflict (or, at the very least, provides incentives and new institutions to reduce the likelihood of a renewal of violence down the road). The singular and collective impact of

transitional judicial reforms, political power-sharing pacts and third-party security guarantees have been debated at length within the literature. Examined to a lesser degree is the contribution civil society actors and INGOs make to the establishment and implementation of these regimes in post-conflict states. The inclusion of these agreements reflects the willingness of a third-party to consider longer time horizons than short-term ceasefires. Svensson (2009) suggests that biased mediators are more likely to expend resources and make costly commitments to ensure the establishment of elaborate institutional arrangements than are neutral mediators. In particular, “rebel-biased mediators tend to increase the likelihood of political power-sharing pacts and third-party security guarantees...while government-biased mediators increase the chance for provisions for territorial power-sharing pacts, government-sided amnesties and repatriation of civilians” (Svensson 2009, p. 448).

A crucial, if sometimes implicit, aspect of the peace process is to foster reconciliation among disputants and affected civilians. The issues that arise “when a government that has engaged in gross violations of human rights is succeeded by a regime more inclined to respect those rights” are known as transitional justice concerns (Olsen et al 2010, p. 805). Olsen et al (2010) identify five mechanisms of transitional justice post-conflict countries employ: 1) trials, 2) truth commissions, 3) amnesties, 4) reparations and 5) lustration policies.<sup>2</sup>

Olsen et al (2010) note that elements of retributive or prosecutorial justice as well as mechanisms allowing for restorative justice are present in these mechanisms and further demonstrate that states may employ more than one of these institutions in the

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<sup>2</sup> “Lustration” is a practice of exclusion from public office those perceived as supporting or complicit with human rights abuses during a prior regime or period of violence. (Brahm 2004).

post-conflict environment. They find that amnesty is the most frequently employed mechanism and, that within that subset, states more frequently grant amnesty to rebel groups before or after civil wars than use the process to account for their own role in human rights abuses (Olsen et al 2010).

Europe holds the regional lead for trials while truth commissions are frequently found in Latin American, African, and Asian countries (Olsen et al 2010). Looking at the impact of human rights trials in Latin America, Sikkink and Walling (2007, p. 428) find that the trials do not “undermine democracy or lead to an increase in human rights violations or conflict in Latin America.” Discussing the tactics most conducive to the protection of human rights and a sustained peace following conflict, Putnam (2002, p. 257) asserts that “ IHROs [International Human Rights Organizations], working in conjunction with other components of peace operations, can orient their training and lobbying efforts toward facilitating the performance of key institutions such as the police and the judiciary, without which the prospects from sustainable peace often appear dim, and the prospects for sustainable rights, even dimmer.”

A second institution frequently found in peace agreements deals with political reforms in the post-conflict government. Power-sharing pacts and guidelines for elections may reassure rebel groups that they will be fairly represented in the new government, but the literature remains heavily divided regarding the impact of these institutions on sustained peace (DeRouen et al 2009, Mukherjee 2006, Walter 2002). DeRouen et al (2009) find that political power-sharing agreements tend to fail sooner than institutions that do not require costly concessions by the government or result in delays in the implementation period. Other scholars (Hartzell 2009; Hartzell and Hoddie 2003) argue

that power-sharing agreements have a cumulative effect—policies that divide or share political, territorial, military and economic power—“foster a sense of security among former enemies and encourage conditions conducive to a self-enforcing peace” (Hartzell and Hoddie 2003, p. 318). Walter (2002) asserts that the number of power-sharing institutions is not sufficient to bring about peace because of expectations of weakness in post-conflict democratic institutions and civic culture. Sisk (1996) adds additional conditions affecting the likelihood of success of power-sharing agreements. First, decisions about whether to pursue consociational or integrative strategies should be based on considerations of feasibility and sustainability. Second, the power-sharing agreement is also subject to conflict ripeness, as discussed previously. Suggesting power-sharing too early in the conflict may result in the rejection of these mechanisms in favor of the potential for out and out victory while introducing the policies too late in the conflict meets barriers due to the deep antagonisms rooted in the conflict (Sisk 1996).

“Adversaries often compromise on the basic issues underlying their conflict, and they often find mutually acceptable solutions to their problems. Negotiations fail because combatants cannot credibly promise to abide by terms that create numerous opportunities for exploitation after the treaty is signed and implementation begins. Only if a third party is willing to enforce or verify demobilization and only if the combatants are willing to extend power-sharing guarantees, will promises to abide by the original terms be credible and negotiations succeed” (Walter 2002, p. 5-6).

Walter’s (2002) credible commitment theory of peace implementation rests heavily on third party security guarantees to verify reciprocal demilitarization of rebel forces and to compel opposition forces to send costly signals to each other to underscore

their commitment to sustained peace. Without this outside intervention, disputants frequently find themselves stuck in a security dilemma—despite both parties truly wishing for peace and the implementation of their agreement, it is too risky to take the first step, demobilize, and leave oneself vulnerable to retaliation and dominance of the other force (Walter 2002).

Triangulating methods, Walter (2002) builds a formal model specifying the conditions under which a peace agreement will be successfully implemented. She then looks at civil wars between 1940 and 1992 and finds that in 90 percent successful implementation rate of agreements featuring a third party security guarantee and power-sharing pacts. While INGOs frequently lack the coercive leverage of intervening states, they can assist with monitoring and verification processes during the implementation of peace agreements (Albin 1999). Additionally, ties to Transnational Advocacy Networks amplify attempts to document and report violations of peace agreement terms. The growth of INGOs and spread of international norms promoting their inclusion in post-conflict demobilization, reconciliation, and reconstruction should make its way into Walter's (2002) theory of credible commitments in future conflicts (Prendergast and Plumb 2002).

### ***Growth of International Non-Governmental Organizations***

Thus far, this literature review has mostly covered the domestic level influences—dynamics of the conflict environment, mediator strategies, etc.—on peace outcomes. However, similar to mediator characteristics interacting with the domestic conflict environment, other international level forces affect the likelihood of a successful settlement. Pivotal to this project are the multitudes of INGOs and their networks. In the

last twenty years, 50 countries have seen increases of over 500 percent in the number of human rights organizations active within its borders (Union of International Associations 2008/2009; Murdie and Bhasin 2010, p. 2). Building on sociological theories concerning political opportunity structures, Reimann (2006) attempts to explain this phenomenon from a top-down perspective. The growth of international organizations and changes in state priorities relating to globalization in recent decades has created new mechanisms and incentives for resource mobilization and political access for INGOs (Reimann 2006).

Additionally, pro-NGO norms in the international community pressure states to include INGOs in state and national policies (Reimann 2006). These norms are rooted in UN attempts to build “people participatory” approaches to conflict resolution in Central America during the 1990s—programs such as the International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA) and the Development Program for Refugees, Displaced and Repatriated Persons in Central America (PRODERE) legitimized INGO and local group consultations with states and “led to new understandings of the development process among state actors” (Reimann 2006, p. 62).

Influential donor states additionally promoted the incorporation of pro-NGO norms within state policies while domestic activism helped to create a symbiotic relationship between states, local civil society actors and INGOs (Keck and Sikkink 1998, Reimann 2006). For example, “Wary of giving too much to governments in the developing world, unwilling to greatly expand the UN’s operational capacity, and not always willing to expand their own bureaucratic and operational infrastructure, donor states have turned to service NGOs as a solution for implementing aid and providing relief in humanitarian crises” (Reimann 2006, p. 64).

The proliferation of INGOs from both bottom-up and top-down sources creates opportunities for these groups to partner with local actors to shape peace agreements and assist with their implementation, in addition to bolstering state capacity and fostering economic development—all forces that the post-conflict literature suggests positively correlate with sustained peace after a civil war. The emergence of Transnational Advocacy Networks magnifies the effect of INGO-domestic civil society partnerships on changes in state behavior.

### *Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANs) and State-Society Relations*

In their capacity to dramatically influence state-society relations, transnational advocacy networks (TANs) may pave the way to the bargaining table for domestic civil society actors as well as international human rights organizations (IHROs). TANs assist with the effectiveness and mission of domestic civil society groups, sometimes even stepping in to fill the void in states where civil society for whatever reason is weak or shallow. Adopting a multi-tiered “top down and bottom up” approach, TANs attempt to change illegitimate state behavior such as physical or civic repression. One of the ways TANs work from the bottom up is to influence the nature and frequency of domestic protest, albeit sometimes with unintended consequences. In combination with all these activities, TANs use their top down influence to enhance negotiations.

In areas where local civil society is absent, perhaps due to severely repressive tactics of an authoritarian state, transnational groups step in to help citizens organize and engage with each other. Sometimes this activity can carry with it a subversive or disobedient quality, as Kaldor and Kostovicova (2008) demonstrate in their discussion of U.K. based websites that help local Zimbabweans get around the hyperinflation plaguing

their country. Friends and family living in the UK can use these websites to “transfer money through the black market...buy groceries...and pay for doctor’s appointments and prescriptions” (Kaldor and Kostovicova 2008, p. 86). Like Twitter and Facebook’s roles in political dissidence, these networks can help citizens organize and combat the consequences of a delegitimized and tyrannical regime.

Examining issue emergence in the global sphere, Carpenter (2007) notes the less tangible effects of TANs on domestic civil society groups. She attempts to address why TANs pick up on some issues, such as child soldiers, and not others, such as children born of rape and sexual violence (Carpenter 2007, p. 100). Belloni (2008) ties Carpenter’s (2007) research agenda to its effect on local civil society groups. Taking a cue from the priorities of prominent (and deep-pocketed) TANs, local groups arrange their projects according to those most likely to receive attention and funding and not along some other criteria (such as achievability or effectiveness or urgency...) (Belloni 2008). Carpenter (2007) suggests that issue attributes, pre-existing moral standards and specific, altruistically motivated individuals are the primary agenda setters among TANs.

Similarly although less connected to funding concerns among domestic civil society actors, Bercovitch and Gordon (2008, p. 881) find a “triangulation between states, donors and human rights NGOs, whereby states have an impact on donor preferences, which, in turn, influences the agenda of human rights NGOs and their modes of operation, and these, in turn, help shape the kind of NGO criticism voiced against the state.” This relationship means that domestic NGOs are typically structured more like businesses, that is, they are in a large part more responsive to their shareholders than to the people or issues they serve (Bercovitch and Gordon 2008). Cooley and Ron (2002, p.



6) run with this analysis, suggesting that the growth among IO's and INGOs increases "uncertainty, competition and insecurity" for all organizations, both domestic and transnational. Encouraging transparency and extending the length of contracts can reduce the uncertainty that actors within TANs experience; in the meantime, Bercovitch and Gordon (2008) that the suboptimal outcomes for local civil society actors are merely rational responses to the current structure of incentives. As the above scholars have indicated, TANs can have both a positive and negative impact domestic civil society actors. Given the likelihood for unintended consequences of a complex policy arena, this trend continues throughout the discussion of TANs influence on state-society relations.

Keck and Sikkink (1998) note the unique role TANs play in shaping domestic change, especially in regard to the human rights practices of states. TANs possess the ability to put illiberal states on the international agenda and threaten the scrutiny of outside states willing to coerce change (Risse et al 1999). Additionally, TANs work with domestic opposition groups and bring their stories to international attention. Linking domestic civil society actors to powerful TANs may also serve as a form of insurance or protection against the retaliatory fist of state security services.

Examining the most common method of advocacy among international human rights organizations, "shaming and blaming", Murdie and Davis (2011) ask whether this tactic actually has any impact on state behavior. Starting with the foundation of the UN Declaration of Human Rights and the establishment of major human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, publicly calling out coercive regimes has been the *modus operandi* to advance changes in state behavior from a top down approach.

Empirically, this perhaps has had less success than such TANs would like to admit. Hafner-Burton (2008) even found that Amnesty's public reports condemning state sponsored torture resulted in *increased* levels of torture the following year (although it is difficult to sort out if this is a causal relationship or residual selection bias from Amnesty reporting on the "worst" or "escalating" human rights abusers). Noting that international human rights organizations also provide connections, funding and information to support domestic groups in efforts to pressure repressive states, Murdie and Davis (2011) include this alternative, bottom-up approach to changing state behavior in their model. In doing so they build off Risse et al's (1999) "spiral model" explaining change in human rights practices.

Risse et al (1999) commences its model with what they term the "boomerang effect." Beleaguered domestic civil society groups reach out to TANs in the hopes of exerting top-down pressure on their repressive government while gaining bottom up support. The second phase features the repressive state denying allegations of human rights abuses (the necessity for a denial is simultaneously a concession that the abuses "had they occurred" would be wrong). Phase three finds the state making tactical concessions in an attempt to get the international community off its back, so to speak. Assuming these attempts are unsuccessful, phase four places the state in "prescriptive status." An international pariah, the state "regularly refers to human rights norms to describe and comment on their own behavior and that of others; the validity claims of the norm are no longer controversial, even if the state continues to engage in rule-violating behavior" (Risse et al 1999, p. 29). Finally, the spiral culminates in the fifth phase, whereby the chastised and reformed state follows the rules. As I elaborate on in the next

chapter, transnational advocacy networks and their domestic counterparts work together in similar fashion to pressure states to settle civil wars peacefully.

Consistent with the implications of Keck and Sikkink's (1998) theory, Murdie and Davis (2011) find that "shaming and blaming" is only effective when TANs employ this tactic in conjunction with support for domestic opposition groups and/or outside pressure by other states, individuals or organizations. Risse et al's (1999) case study of political change in Kenya and Uganda demonstrate their "spiral model" in practice and affirm Murdie and Davis' (2011) assertion that transnational activism in the form of "shaming and blaming" is not enough, inclusion of domestic groups is a necessary component of changes in state behavior. The Kenyan and Ugandan experiences also illustrate how TANs shape the nature of domestic protest in attempts to create bottom-up change.

Advocating the benefits of nonviolent protest, Chenoweth and Stephan (2008) cited a success rate of 53 percent for major nonviolent campaigns, compared to a 26 percent success rate for violent resistance. In addition to typically holding liberal and pacific values, TANs rely on statistics such as those produced by Chenoweth and Stephan's (2008) scholarship to promote nonviolent resistance tactics among domestic civil society opposition groups. Bartley (2007) illustrates how the process of funding these domestic actors channels the nature of protest away from violent activities to moderate tactics and/or goals.

Assessing the impact of TANs on domestic anti-government protest, Murdie and Bhasin (2010) tie the international NGO's effectiveness to its level of commitment to domestic actors. They develop a three tiered index cataloguing an INGO's activities in a targeted state: 1) the INGO only engages in remote "shaming and blaming", 2) the INGO

sends volunteers to the field or otherwise works to build a local membership base or 3) the INGO establishes a permanent in-state office (Murdie and Bhasin 2010). While the INGO's most likely hope to encourage nonviolent forms of protest, the inherent diffusion in such activities leads to unintended consequences (Andrews and Biggs 2006). The local attention generated by training in peaceful civil disobedience or organized protests, for example, frequently leads to more protest; however, the commitment to pacific tactics might not hold as much sway with newcomers to the movement (Murdie and Bhasin 2010).

Albin (1999) asserts that the participation of NGO's, both transnational and domestic, contribute positively to international negotiations. She identifies seven functions that NGOs perform—some unique and all provided at least as well as, if not better, than formal Track I negotiators: 1) Problem definition, agenda-setting and goal setting; 2) Enforcement of principles and norms; 3) Provision of information and expertise; 4) Public advocacy and mobilization; 5) Lobbying; 6) Direct Participation in formation of agreements and 7) Provide monitoring and assistance with other issues of compliance (Albin 1999, p. 371).

Pfaffenholz et al (2006) agree with her assessment and propose that domestic civil society actors are included in peace negotiations to a degree inversely proportional to the democratic nature of Track I parties. In his careful consideration of the role played by the Community of Sant'Egidio during peace negotiations between the *Frelimo* and *Renamo* parties in Mozambique, Bartoli (1999) notes the Catholic group's instrumental value in serving as a conduit between disputants before the official peace talks commenced in Rome. The Community's actions, in his view, ripened the conflict for resolution, thus

reaffirming Wanis-St. John and Kew's (2008) normative implications concerning the relationship between civil society actors and sustained peace agreements.

The ability of TANs to shape state-society relations particularly in the realm of contentious politics and post-conflict negotiations has been outlined above. In the next chapter, I posit that there is a positive correlation between the presence of INGOs operating within a country embroiled in civil war and the inclusion of like-minded domestic civil society counterparts in peace negotiations. The INGO's hand in bringing the domestic group to the bargaining table may be obvious due to public advocacy, perhaps. Alternatively, the training and resources provided by a committed INGO may prompt recipient domestic groups to take an assertive stand and elbow their way into the room, so to speak. Tracing the involvement of TANs during the peace negotiation process and its evolving relationship with relevant domestic groups offers the potential to further specify the impact civil society actors have in the peace process and the implementation of agreements.

## CHAPTER III

### THEORY

*“When people become directly affected by armed conflict, they develop a central interest in contributing to its resolution. Despite being confronted with harsh realities and huge dilemmas, civil-society actors can make significant contributions to peace processes. The capacities may help to create the conditions for talks, build confidence between the parties, shape the conduct and content of negotiations and influence the sustainability of peace agreements” (McKeon 2005, p. 567).*

As McKeon (2005) suggests, NGOs and other civil society actors can have significant impact at every stage in the peace process. The logic behind this expectation is the argument that NGOs / civil society actors provide Track I mediators with additional leverage, information, representation, and assurance to skeptical or vulnerable participants (and the wider citizenry) during and after negotiations. As outlined in the literature review, the activities of NGOs and civil society representatives interact with the conflict environment to create incentives for peaceful settlement.

As in the case of Burundi (Hara 1999), mitigating factors such as low state capacity, coordination problems or conflicting domestic and international NGO agendas

may complicate my expected relationship between levels of INGO involvement and peace outcomes. Therefore, my theory can be thought of in two stages. I offer a leverage-based explanation for my expectations of a cross-national impact of NGOs on peace outcomes; however, I condition this leverage with elements of cooperation among interveners necessarily for the benefits of D / INGO involvement to materialize. Borrowing from Keck and Sikkink's (1998) spiral model of Transnational Advocacy Networks, I devise a four step process of domestic and international civil society collaboration to influence state actors (and non-state disputants) during and after peace negotiations. Briefly, this process represents a spiral of deepening ties between domestic and international NGOs and other civil society actors that maximize the informational and representative leverage both groups can bear upon conflict management attempts. Explaining and examining the impact of various Track II activities during the peace process furthers the development of a reliable and valid cross-national measure of civil society engagement in the peace process. Furthermore, tracing the four-step process illustrates how these weaker coalitions of actors come to have a collective impact on conflict outcomes.

Given the dominance of Track I actors in conflict management, the involvement of NGOs and civil society actors in the peace process can frequently be conceptualized as multiparty mediation. Böhmelt (2011) suggests that involving multiple actors in a diplomatic intervention increases leverage over the disputants because of the combined resources at the disposal of the mediating parties. Additionally, the burdens and risks of mediation can be spread evenly over the interveners, deflecting their domestic audience costs to others (Crocker et al 1999). Keck and Sikkink (1998) note that in complex scenarios (in their study, state human rights practices) require that weaker actors use every advantage to influence policy changes. Through cooperation with more powerful actors and linking issues to material or moral concerns, "weak groups gain

influence far beyond their ability to influence state practices directly” (Keck and Sikkink 1998, p. 23). Track I mediators may have more resources at their disposal, such as aid assistance or peacekeepers; however, NGOs and other informal actors can provide leverage to the negotiations through providing unique information, advocacy, and their capacity for public mobilization (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Risse et al 1999; Wanis-St. John and Kew 2008).

Figure 2 depicts a conceptual map of the interactions and unique contributions of local and international NGO involvement in peace negotiations. The dashed lines represent the notion that connections of domestic and international NGOs to Track 1 mediators and the actual peace negotiations do not occur in every peace process (though I posit that these connections especially strengthen the likelihood of a sustained peace). Under each Track II actor involved in the peace process is a list of possible tools at their disposal to influence conflict outcomes.

INGOs bring technical expertise, financial resources and top-down pressure on combatants to the peace process. Additionally, they, through the use of Transnational Advocacy Networks, have tremendous capacity for advocacy and reporting human rights abuses in conflicts. INGOs may have the same mission, but specialize in certain activities or tactics. For example, Amnesty International and the International Red Cross have similar missions for peace, but diverging approaches to achieving their goals—most notably, Amnesty publishes their findings on human rights abuses regularly, while the Red Cross privately urges states to reform their behavior (in order to maintain access to internally displaced persons or prisoners). INGOs also interact with mediators to advocate for specific mediation strategies or offer resources to build a sustainable peace agreement (such as offering to monitor peace agreements or establish a truth and reconciliation committee).

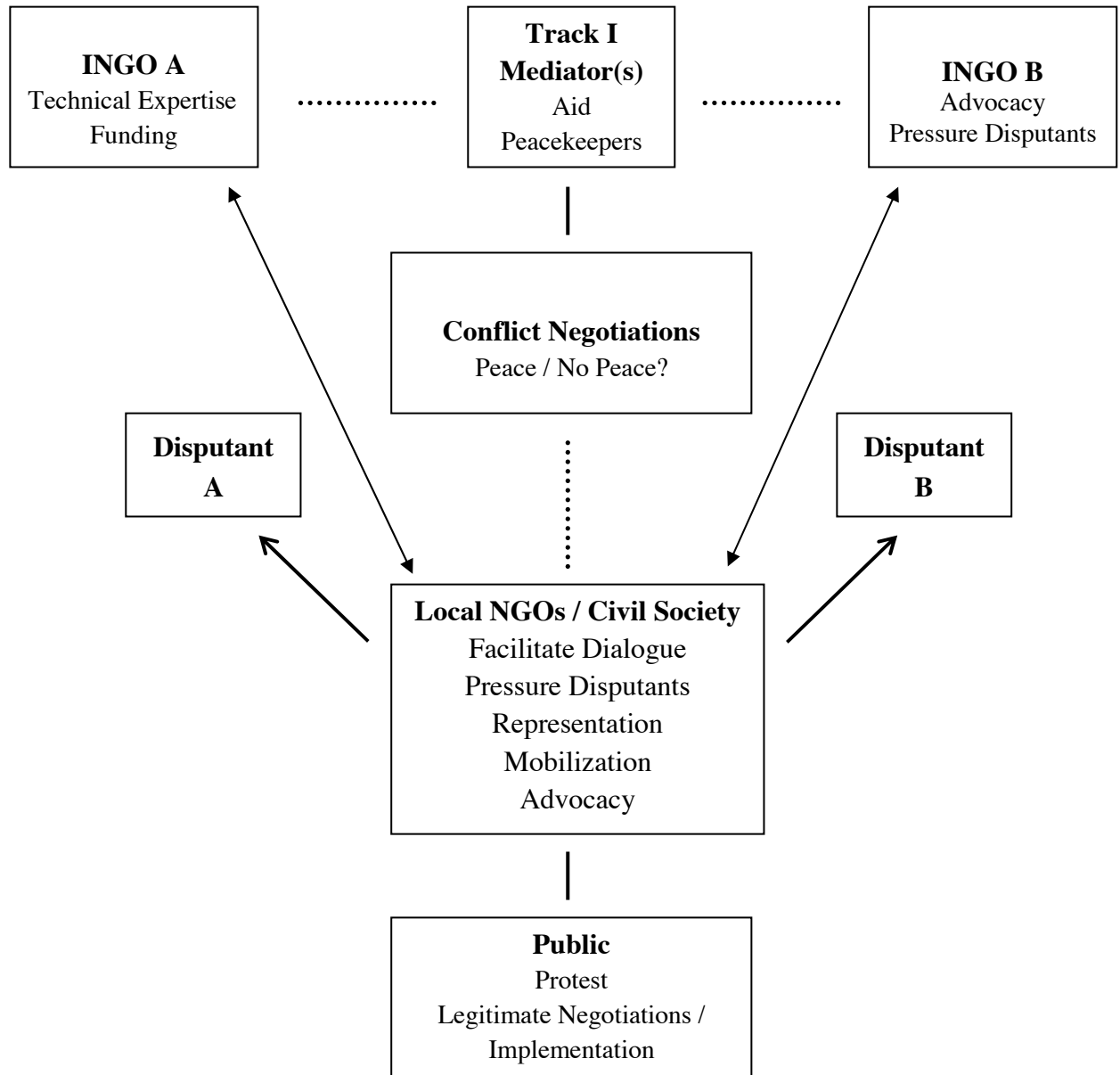


Mediators in this process have the power of their state or institution behind them. They can offer carrots such as peacekeepers and reconstruction funding or sticks like the threat of sanctions or more coercive intervention to the combatants to urge them to accept the terms of a peace agreement. Mediators who adopt a softer approach or are neutral to the conflict outcome may focus on facilitating dialogue between combatants (activities that INGOs such as the Olaf Palme International Center may facilitate). Combatants hold the power to continue or unilaterally end peace negotiations and to accept or reject the terms of a peace agreement. Their receptiveness to civil society / NGO involvement in the peace process is also a crucial factor in determining where on the inclusion-exclusion spectrum the peace negotiations lie.

Local NGOs engage in similar ways with the peace process as INGOs, but from a different perspective. When they pressure or facilitate dialogue between disputants, they are speaking on behalf of the people most affected by conflict, civilians. They have an informational advantage over INGOs and perhaps have more credibility to mobilize the public to support peace. INGOs partner with local NGOs to raise awareness about the conflict and maximize the impact of limited resources. Local and INGOs may hold peace workshops to train activists in non-violent forms of protest or how to engage in dialogue with members of the opposition.

The last actor with influence over the peace process is the public at large. It is their support that, at times, fuels rebel activities and they hold the power to legitimate a peace agreement or break off into a new rebel faction. The public also plays a role in implementing peace agreements, by setting up civilian monitoring committees or participating in truth and reconciliation commissions. Local NGOs serve as a conduit between public's needs and demands, the combatants, and the international community. Below I elaborate on how local NGOs maximize their leverage over the peace process.

**Figure 2: Contributions of Local and International NGOs to Peace Negotiations**



McKeon (2005, p. 569) argues that “the state-based international system is comparatively ill-equipped to deal with the people involved in localized armed violence. In such situations, civil-society actors—whether indigenous or external—are arguably best-placed to complement state-driven diplomatic efforts at the leadership level, given their comparatively low-profile access within communities and greater flexibility than —from the needs of militants during the demobilization process to testimonies of human rights abuses at the hands of rebel groups or state armed forces (Serbin 2005).

In addition to the transmission of technical reports and dramatic anecdotes from the “fog of war” to the international community, local and international NGOs can serve as go-betweens for Track 1 mediators and disputants as well as conduits between combatants. For example, Strimling (2006) discusses the cooperation between the Conflict Management Group and the U.S. Department of State during facilitation between Ecuador and Peru in 1998. As mentioned previously, Bartoli’s (1999) analysis of the role of the Community of Sant’Egidio in the Mozambique peace process remains a powerful example of the impact local actors can have in maintaining dialogue between disputants, even when official negotiations have stalled.

Closely related to the unique informational contribution of NGOs and local civil society groups is their capacity for advocacy. Reporting narratives from the situation on the ground can be a powerful catalyst to spur or renew the international community’s commitment to conflict management. Additionally, providing a voice for the most vulnerable citizens affected by war introduces another level of representation to the peace process. This representation may lead to

NGOs lobbying for specific institutions or protections for their constituents in peace agreements; institutions that may support a sustained peace environment if implemented. However, just who the NGO represents and advocates for is an important caveat that will be discussed in more detail later (Assefa 2004).

Another aspect of NGO impact on peace processes considers their capacity to mobilize both the international community and domestic populations. Arguing that Peace and Conflict Resolution Organizations (P / CROs) possess many of the same characteristics as social movement organizations, Gidron et al (2002, p. 18) assert that P/ CROs “capacity to recruit members, links to other organizations providing funding, legitimacy and expertise” influenced peace outcomes in Northern Ireland, Israel / Palestine, and South Africa . NGOs that can mobilize the public create an incentive for those at the bargaining table to consider broader factors in their peace agreements. Keck and Sikkink (1998) assert that including and mobilizing the public not only provide the informational and advocacy advantages discussed above, but introduces “moral leverage...where the behavior of target actors is held up to the light of international scrutiny” (p. 23).

Rather than adopting a ceasefire, public opinion can help mediators facilitate a comprehensive agreement. Through providing information, engaging in advocacy and mobilization strategies, INGOs and local actors can leverage their involvement in peace negotiations. These activities additionally hold strong sway over public perceptions of conflict negotiations—perhaps soft power for some Track II actors participating in the peace process (Nye 2004). The elements of leverage these actors can bring to the mediation process lead to my first hypothesis:

*H1: Conflict management attempts in states with higher levels of domestic and INGO involvement (D/ INGO) will be more likely to end in a partial or full peace agreement than in states with low levels of Track II involvement.*

A final manner in which NGOs may impact peace negotiations is at the implementation stage of peace agreements. The level of NGO and civil society membership in a country may be a good proxy variable for the amount of human and social capital available to implement peace. As detailed in Chapter Two, the time period immediately following a conflict is especially vulnerable to renewed violence (Rothchild 2002). Walter (2002) asserts that combatants, despite agreeing to the terms of a peace agreement, sometimes become locked in a security dilemma because they cannot be certain that their opponent is disarming at the same rate (or at all), for example. Through its monitoring and verification capacity, I argue that NGOs are well-suited to oversee the implementation of peace agreement provisions and reduce the uncertainty surrounding this process through introduction of what Keck and Sikkink (1998) deem “accountability politics” (p. 24). Persbo (2010) notes that NGOs are propping up that serve this very purpose in a wide range of issue areas, from Global Witness’s work in ensuring diamonds are conflict-free to Landmine Monitor—a group monitoring compliance to the 1999 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. Mediators with greater interest in conflict outcomes are more likely to push for institutions in peace agreements that help a state recover after a civil war (Svensson 2009); it follows that NGOs devoted to peace and conflict resolution would be especially willing to assist with the implementation of such agreements.

*H2: Peace agreements signed in states with higher levels of D / INGO involvement will be more likely to endure than peace agreements signed in states with lower levels of D/ INGO involvement.*

*H3: Peace agreements signed in states with higher levels of D / INGO involvement will be more likely to include institutions such as transitional justice mechanisms, power-sharing pacts, and specific protections for human rights than peace agreements signed in states with lower levels of D / INGO involvement.*

As the unsuccessful mediation attempts in Burundi (Hara 1999) indicate, “multiparty mediation may lead to serious co-ordination problems and a lack of transparency over the allocation of responsibilities” (Böhmelt 2011). Conflicting agendas stemming from NGOs representing different societal groups (sometimes with sympathies to claims of one combatant over the other) may create more discord in the peace process than fostering conditions for the achievement and implementation of a peace agreement (Assefa 2005). Despite these contradictory claims found within the literature (Assefa 2005; Böhmelt 2011; Crocker et al 1999), I argue that, in the aggregate (and especially over time), NGOs and state actors have fostered new paths to cooperation such that the benefits their involvement brings to peace outcomes are experienced more frequently. I posit that the concerns about multi-party mediation implied in a title like *Herding Cats* (Crocker et al 1999) are a powerful explanation for outlier cases, assuming the general trend is a positive relationship between NGO involvement and peace outcomes.

A model that “highlights relationships, resources, and institutional structures” may reconcile the diverging claims about the impact of Track II actors on peace negotiations by determining the likelihood of the cooperation or discord among actors in the process. Qualitatively examining cases for the presence of Transnational Advocacy Networks may shed significant light on the means by which some Track II actors in some peace processes overcome the cooperation and coordination problems detailed above. Keck and Sikkink (1998) assert that

“transnational advocacy networks appear most likely to emerge around those issues where 1) channels between domestic groups and their governments are blocked or hampered...2) activists or ‘political entrepreneurs’ believe that networking will further their mission and campaigns; and 3) conferences and other forms of international contact create arenas for forming and strengthening networks” (p. 12). Building off of Keck and Sikkink’s (1998) spiral model for the establishment of an effective Transnational Advocacy Network to influence a state’s human rights performance, I create a four step process demonstrating the role and impact of domestic and international NGO partnerships at every phase of a conflict (See Figure 3). These stages are based upon the mechanisms of leverage I identified previously to explain why I expect NGO involvement to positively impact peace processes in the aggregate. I anticipate that cases that do not fit this pattern (such as Burundi (Hara 1999)) will also fail to follow the four stages I outline below.

The stages of this process correspond to elements of the conflict environment. During active armed hostilities between state security forces and at least one opposition group, I anticipate that the main goal of domestic and/or international NGOs will center on bringing the disputants to the bargaining table and enacting a ceasefire. As local actors will have much more information during the initial stages of a conflict, domestic NGOs should take the lead in step one. That is to say, civil society actors / domestic NGOs (DNGOs) will reach out to the international community to implement conflict management attempts. Specifically, these actors will seek partnerships with INGOs to leverage influence in the international sphere and acquire resources to help ripen the local environment for negotiations. Simultaneously, DNGOs spring into action to raise domestic awareness, mobilize the public and influence perceptions about the need to end the conflict quickly.

The second step occurs upon INGOs receiving the DNGOs appeals for involvement. Through Transnational Advocacy Networks, INGOs raise awareness of the conflict situation at regional and international forums and pressure disputants to adhere to human rights norms, turn to non-violent dispute resolution mechanisms, etc. Additionally, to deepen partnerships and gain additional information to send through the network, INGOs may provide funding to their domestic counterparts. As these domestic and international partnerships deepen, these actors (along with other actors in the international community—states and organizations—and perhaps the disputants themselves) shift the conflict environment to support peace negotiations.

During this phase of the conflict, hostilities may or may not be active, but conflict management attempts are underway. D / INGO involvement at this stage (3) focuses on shaping interactions between disputants during negotiations. To this end, D / INGO groups may facilitate dialogue and serve as a conduit for information between the groups. Additionally, they may use their moral leverage to advocate respect for human rights and the establishment of institutions in the peace agreement to protect those rights. I argue that these efforts are more effective if these actors are actually present at the bargaining table; however, it is not a necessary condition for the success of negotiations.

If there is a breakdown in talks and / or resumption in violence, the domestic and international NGO partnerships should cycle back to step one and again attempt to persuade the disputants to return to mediation. Once, however, the disputants reach a peace agreement, D / INGOs play a vital role in the implementation of this agreement and in societal recovery from the conflict. Additionally, INGO efforts may turn away from peace and conflict resolution efforts towards economic development as a way to prevent future conflict and pave the way for sustainable democratic political system.



### **Figure 3: Establishment and Impact of Transnational Advocacy Network in Peace Process**

*Phase of Conflict: Active armed hostilities between state security forces and at least one opposition group*

**Step One:** Civil Society Actors / Domestic NGOs reach out to international community to implement conflict management attempts; specifically partner with INGOs to leverage influence in international sphere. Simultaneously work to raise domestic awareness, mobilize the public and influence perceptions about conflict management attempts.

**Step Two:** INGOs, through TANs, raise awareness of conflict situation at regional and international level; fund domestic NGOs / civil society groups; and pressure disputants to adhere to human rights norms and mechanisms for dispute resolution.

*Phase of Conflict: Hostilities may or may not be active; International Conflict Management attempts—Mediation with or without other mechanisms such as peacekeeping forces—underway*

**Step Three:** Domestic and international NGO involvement in peace negotiations to shape peace, facilitate dialogue among combatants; “ripen” conflict for peace. (Caveat: I posit that efforts at this stage are more effective if these actors are actually present at the bargaining table; however, I do not require this as a necessary condition for this step in the model).

*Phase of Conflict: Peace Agreement (proceed to step 4) or breakdown in talks / resumption in violence (return to step 1)*

**Step Four:** Domestic and international NGOs work to implement peace agreements, promote reconciliation, and foster economic development.

*Phase of Conflict: Enduring peace or renewal of violence (return to step 1)*

This four-stage process leads to two final hypotheses:

*H4: Domestic NGOs with similar missions and agendas will be more likely to partner and cooperate with like-minded INGOs during the peace process than D/ INGOs of diverging philosophies or purposes.*

*H5: Peace processes that experience high levels of D / INGO involvement, but little cooperation and coordination among state and Track II actors (and the Track II actors with each other) will be less likely to experience sustained peace outcomes than cases that have both high levels of D / INGO involvement and cooperation with conflict managers.*

The four-stage process is just one way to think about the interaction between domestic and international groups with phases of the conflict. Another layer of this interaction concerns the depth of these groups' involvement during each phase of the conflict. NGOs and civil society actors have a variety of tools at their disposal to shift public opinion towards peace and persuade elites to adopt certain policies. Some of these activities, such as advocacy for those most vulnerable to the effects of war and reporting human rights violations, can be conducted at any phase of the conflict cycle. Others, like monitoring ceasefires, are by virtue confined to one particular phase of the conflict, in this example, the de-escalation / implementation phase.

Figure 4 depicts the various types of exercises that I envision NGOs and other civil society actors use to influence conflict outcomes. Activities listed at the top of the graph are those which could be undertaken during multiple phases of the conflict while those at the end of the list are confined to one phase. I argue that, more important than participation in any particular activity or combination of activities, is sustained, consistent NGO engagement during all phases of the conflict. Continuous NGO / civil society interaction with the public and elites during hostilities and peace negotiations will boost the credibility of Track II efforts and, I posit, boost

their influence on conflict outcomes. Unlike the previous figure, this causal mechanism is not entirely dependent upon cooperation and collaboration between domestic and international NGOs. However, cooperation among levels will leverage this influence further. Formally stated:

*H6: Conflicts that feature sustained NGO engagement across all phases of fighting—active armed hostilities, peace negotiations, and peace agreement implementation—will be more likely to experience sustained peace than conflicts with little or inconsistent NGO engagement.*

<b>Table 1: Types of NGO engagement during all conflict phases</b>			
	Outbreak of Armed Hostilities	Peace Negotiations	Peace Agreement (PA) Implementation
Advocacy / Pressure Disputants	X	X	X
Mobilize Public	X	X	X
Peace Workshops / Peace Education	X	X	X
Human Rights Documentation	X	X	X
Facilitate Dialogue	X	X	X
Consultation / Technical Expertise		X	X
Economic Development		X	X
Monitor PA Implementation			X
Assist with Combatant Demobilization and Reintegration			X
Facilitate Democratic Transition / Elections			X

The “X” pattern in the conflict phase columns represents the ideal nature of Track II engagement during a civil war. The pattern indicates early engagement with the public and elites at the conflict’s onset. This engagement does not dissipate or waver as the conflict progresses to other stages, despite these actors relying on other, phase-dependent means of influencing conflict

outcomes. Instead, NGOs and civil society actors remain connected to the key players in the dispute—the combatants themselves, elites appointed to settle the conflict, and the broader citizenry from which the combatants draw fighters and support or moral justification. Of course, in the real world of limited resources and budgets, it is not always possible to achieve this ideal of maximum engagement. However, I posit that conflicts will have a better chance at experiencing sustained peace if these Track II actors can adopt a strategy of comparative advantage with certain groups specializing in one particular activity, such as economic development or ceasefire monitoring, thereby freeing up resources for other NGOs to participate in general peacebuilding activities, like organizing nonviolent protests or facilitating dialogue among disputants. In the next chapter I discuss my quantitative and qualitative research design for testing my theoretical expectations.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESEARCH DESIGN

The methodology employed in this study has elements of both theory-testing and theory-generating qualitative research design. My theory concerning the means by which informal actors in peace negotiations leverage their influence over conflict outcomes builds upon findings from the academic and practitioner literature. However, in-depth investigations of peace processes in a few civil wars yield the possibility for clarifying my theory and more accurately articulating the ways in which NGOs and civil society actors work together and with their international counterparts during different phases of the conflict cycle. To my knowledge, there is not yet a measure available for quantitatively testing of NGO engagement in the peace process. Some measures, such as Bercovitch and Houston (2000), identify “mediator type” in conflict negotiations and specify whether the mediator was a part of an NGO. However, mediation is but one small part of the entire peace process and captures only one way in which these Track II actors can influence conflict outcomes—by directly leading peace negotiations. Identifying the ways in which NGOs participate in the peace process and the timing of their interventions outlines a framework for a measure of NGO engagement that could be employed across a variety of conflicts.

This study adopts the peace process as its unit of analysis. This includes interactions related to ending the conflict between combatants, the international community, domestic NGOs and civil society actors, and the public during armed hostilities, peace negotiations facilitated or mediated by a third party, and during implementation of a resulting peace agreement. I analyze three civil wars from Central and Southeast Asia—the Aceh-Indonesian conflict, the Mindanao-Philippines conflict, and the Tamil-Sri Lankan war—from the 1970s up to the present day. These cases were selected according to a most similar systems design that will be described in detail below.

The dependent variable in this project has been used interchangeably as either “conflict outcome” or “peace outcome.” There are several ways in which this concept can be operationalized (Klein et al 2008). A weak idea of peace is that active, armed hostilities cease. However, I adopt a richer definition of peace when discussing the idea of “sustained peace” in my theory. While this could be defined as entire resolution of the conflict, the operationalization I employ for hypothesis evaluation is a middle group between the weak / no active fighting and a full resolution of the underlying motivations fueling the conflict, such as goals for independence among a subset population of the state. That is to say, in order to find confirmation for a hypothesis, the conflict must end with a ceasefire or peace agreement that does not break down within five years of the signing. While I do not require evidence of the combatants forfeiting their goals entirely, there must be indications that the parties are engaged in a good faith effort to uphold the peace agreement (and not merely using the ceasefire to replenish their weapons supply, for example). In order to determine if there is partial support for a hypothesis, I look at the various components building an ultimately unsustainable peace agreement. For

example, if there is a direct link between an NGO activity (monitoring a ceasefire) and an outcome (ceasefire holds for X number of months), I will consider this when evaluating the amount of impact Track II actors have a particular peace process.

The independent variable is “NGO / civil society engagement” in the peace process. Again, this can be conceptualized in a multitude of ways, as outlined in my theory. To recap, I define civil society as “the vast array of public-oriented associations that are not formal parts of the governing institutions of the state: everything from community associations to religious institutions, trade unions, nongovernmental organizations (such as human rights groups, relief organizations, development organizations and conflict resolution groups), business associations and professional associations such as the Bar or accountants’ associations” (Wanis-St. John and Kew, p. 15).

Engagement can be thought of as any of the activities listed in Table 1 — facilitating dialogue, documenting human rights violations, fostering economic development, etc. As the timing of intervention plays an important explanatory role in my theory of NGO leverage over the peace process, I rely on Diehl and Druckman’s (2009) understanding of the conflict cycle. I divide the conflict into three phases — active armed hostilities, peace negotiations, and the post-conflict implementation of a peace agreement. Throughout the qualitative investigation I will also evaluate cooperation between domestic and international NGOs by looking for evidence of INGOs funding domestic groups, domestic groups reaching out to INGOs to gain the audience of the international community, and other instance of collaborated efforts among the two levels (such as jointly hosting peace education workshops).

“A plausibility probe is comparable to a pilot study in experimental or survey research. It allows the research to sharpen a hypothesis or theory, to refine the operationalization or measurement of key variables, or to explore the suitability of a particular case as a vehicle for testing a theory before engaging in a costly and time-consuming research effort, whether that effort involves a major quantitative data collection project, extensive fieldwork, a large survey or detailed archival work” (Levy 2008, p. 6). Adopting a slightly stricter version of a plausibility probe will allow me to evaluate and refine my theoretical expectations. It also permits latitude to investigate the conflict throughout all stages of the peace process and identify additional causal mechanisms or new patterns of NGO behavior to influence conflict outcomes. The comparative analysis will help to determine the explanatory power of my theory when controlling for alternative explanations, such as Walter’s (2002) third-party security guarantee thesis.

In order to introduce variance into my dependent variable and make my results a little more generalizable, I select three cases according to a most-similar systems design. This design attempts to match cases where as many independent variables as possible are similar while the dependent variable varies (Levy 2008). I created a list of easily-measured variables from the literature known to affect conflict outcomes—conflict duration and severity, mediator type and bias, and mediation attempts. Additionally I looked at the type of conflict (territorial conflict or demands for a change in government) and the region to hold characteristics such as culture, history and geography as similar as possible. Once I compiled this spreadsheet, I made a list of internal conflicts occurring post World War II expanded from Wanis-St. John and Kew’s (2008) analysis of 25 civil



war cases. I used their measure of civil society involvement to guide my thinking, but ultimately, the three cases I selected were not from their dataset. Nonetheless, preliminary research based upon Murdie's (2009) cross-national index of international organizations indicated that Indonesian and the Philippines conflicts would present most likely tests of my theories, while Sri Lanka would be a harder test for my theory (George and Bennett 2005). As Indonesia and the Philippines have experienced multiple and simultaneous internal conflicts over their history as independent states, I chose the Aceh and Mindanao cases based upon similarities to each other and the Sinhalese-Tamil civil war in Sri Lanka. The civil war in Aceh and the Moro separatist movement in the Mindanao region of the Philippines are both, to some degree, Muslim-based separatist movements. The Aceh conflict and the Sri Lankan civil war were both dramatically impacted by the 2004 tsunami, but with diverging consequences. The tsunami is credited in Indonesia with serving as a catalyst for peace; however, relations between the Sinhalese and the Tamils are thought to have worsened in its wake (Gaillard et al 2008). The Tamil Tiger rebels and Moro separatists fight from a history of ethnic-based discrimination and prejudice while Indonesian repression in Aceh seems more related to protection and exploitation of Sumatra's considerable natural resources than any of the unique cultural and religious characteristics of the Acehnese. Finally, both the Mindanao region and Tamil provinces experienced an influx of landless settlers from the majority ethnic group / religion in the lead up to the fighting (Orjuela 2003, Rood 2005).

There are also similarities that appear across all three of the civil wars. First, most obviously, they are regionally quite close. All three have experienced the legacies of colonialism under British (Sri Lanka), Dutch (Aceh) or Spanish (Philippines) rule.

Geographically speaking, the Philippines and Indonesia are quite similar as each are comprised of a chain of islands. All of the conflicts formally commenced in the 1970s and lasted at least 30 years. Rebel combatants in all three conflicts obtain their weapons through similar means—arms smuggling routes running through Thailand, Cambodia and Malaysia (McBeth 2002). All three conflicts were mediated at different points in time by relatively impartial third parties, but the Aceh conflict is unique in that two different NGOs served as lead mediators during negotiations.

This element makes the Aceh conflict stand out from other Indonesian conflicts (such as the East Timor separatist movement) because it presents an interesting test for my theory—if my theory is to have any weight at all, it is safe to assume that an NGO actually mediating a dispute presents quite an opportunity for Track II actors to shape the peace outcome. The sheer level of INGOs reported by Murdie (2009) presents another heuristic for expectations concerning how well my theory would hold up in a particular case. Give that I posit that continuous and sustained involvement from NGOs and civil society is crucial to a successful peace outcome, the more Track II actors there are to share the burden, the better. Initial perusal of the Sri Lankan case indicated that it would be a harder test, given the low numbers of INGOs reported by Murdie (2009) and the fewer third party attempts at conflict management.

As required by a most similar research design, each conflict ended differently. The GAM (Free Aceh Movement) and Indonesian government signed a peace accord in 2005 that currently remains in force. After signing a 1996 peace agreement with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the Philippines continues its struggle against Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and Abu Sayef rebels in the Mindanao region.

The Sri Lankan government announced in late 2009 that it had defeated the Tamil Tiger separatist movement after 33 years of fighting. In the following chapter I will investigate the types and levels of NGO / civil society engagement through each process. I will then compare my findings in order to evaluate my hypotheses and suggest paths for further research.

## CHAPTER V

### CASE STUDIES

#### **Aceh**

Aceh is located on the resource-rich island of Sumatra in Northern Indonesia. The Acehese national identity reflects the religious and independent character developed during the province's powerful days as seat to an Islamic empire during the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Uppsala 2008a). After Indonesian independence from the Netherlands in 1949, Aceh was established as a largely autonomous province. However, as the new state consolidated more and more aspects of governance, tensions arose (Large and Aguswandi 2008). The region's discontent was exacerbated by the arrival of oil and gas companies to transfer Aceh's substantial resources (and profits) back to secular Jakarta. Finally, in 1976, the *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM)*—Free Aceh Movement—launched an independence movement targeted mainly against Indonesian military (TNI) forces stationed in the province to protect ExxonMobil operations (Large and Aguswandi 2008).

Far from a linear progression, the Aceh peace process has been punctuated by stalemates, reversals and exogenous shocks such as the 2004 tsunami. Unusually, two different NGOs have headed mediation efforts—the Henry Durant Center for Humanitarian Dialogue in the late 1990s and the Conflict Management Initiative

After the break down in a 2003 peace agreement. This case study traces the involvement of local and international NGOs and other civil society actors at each phase of the conflict. As I outlined in my research design, I systematically look for evidence of leverage over peace talks and cooperation among domestic and international groups. I also investigate other causal mechanisms and evaluate the significance of impact on peace outcomes that can be attributed to NGO and civil society activities.

### *Peace Activities During Active Armed Hostilities*

After the outbreak of fighting in 1976, Government forces initially emerged triumphant amid tremendous human rights abuses in the “Military Operations Zones.” However, relying on arms smuggling routes from Thailand, Malaysia and Cambodia, the GAM quietly rebuilt its forces to renew attacks in the early 1990s. During active hostilities and beyond, NGOs and other sectors of civil society have provided a diverse array of services to conflict-torn areas of Aceh, especially in regards to capacity-building, peace education, research and data gathering, and legal and non-legal advocacy (Askandar 2005). Examples of these groups include the Aceh Working Group—a coalition of peace and conflict resolution NGOs based in Jakarta, the Aceh Civil Society Task Force, the People’s Crisis Center, Save Aceh, the Coalition for Human Rights NGOs and Aceh media watch.

Student-led protests in Banda Aceh proved successful in persuading the government to resume negotiations with the GAM in mid-2000 (Askandar 2005, Reid 2000). Additionally, many groups set up shop in rural Aceh to offer humanitarian assistance and economic rehabilitation for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) (Lahdensuo 2010). For example, Flower Aceh provides skills training and family

planning education to rural women while promoting gender equality (Lahdensuo 2010). However, these NGOs have not operated in a space of respect and tolerance among the disputants. While the GAM committed human rights abuses in their own right, such as the targeting of schools (McBeth 2002), the TNI viewed NGOs as biased toward their enemy (Djalal 2001). As such, humanitarian aid workers frequently found themselves targeted by security forces (Djalal 2000). Methods of intimidation included raids on NGO offices, arrests and/or disappearances of activists (Askandar 2005). Less common, but exceptionally intimidating nonetheless were the murders of high-profile civil society leaders. For example, the heads of the two biggest universities in Aceh were assassinated (Askandar 2005).

After several Danish NGO volunteers were murdered in broad daylight, INGOs such as Oxfam, Doctors without Borders and Save the Children pulled staff from Aceh and cancelled several programs (Aspinall and Crouch 2003). Between January 1999 and October 2001, the Aceh Coalition for Human Rights reported 75 cases of violence against NGO workers and student activists (Askandar 2005). During this time of intense conflict (worse than the height of TNI's free rein in Military Operation Zones during the 1990s), many activists tried to work in exile—holding peacebuilding workshops in major cities across Southeast Asia (Askandar 2005, Aspinall and Crouch 2003).

### *First Round of Peace Talks*

The first round of third party facilitation commenced in 1999 under the auspices of the Henri Durant Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (HDC) (Huber 2008). This Swedish NGO was relatively new and the Aceh conflict represented its first attempt at facilitation (Huber 2008). Aspinall and Crouch (2003) outline the pros and cons of

HDC's involvement. First, the support of the international community behind HDC's efforts gave it leverage over the talks. However, its low profile ameliorated Indonesia's concerns that internationalized talks would legitimize the GAM (Aspinall and Crouch 2003). Darmi (2008) asserts that civil society organizations helped encourage the acceptance of mediation among a public skeptical that a small NGO could bring results. That said, the talks collapsed in 2003, no doubt in part due to HDC's inexperience, limited local knowledge and small size (Aspinall and Crouch 2003). The key issue of the talks centered on whether the Acehnese should become entirely independent or remain part of the Indonesian state (Aspinall and Crouch 2003). The HDC's strategy was one of distraction away from this seemingly irreconcilable question to focus on more practical matters such as ceasing hostilities, demobilization and reconstruction. Eventually, participation in these measures would inspire enough confidence between the disputants to broach final resolution of Acehnese autonomy (Aspinall and Crouch 2003).

HDC achieved early success in its dialogue process through achievement of a Joint Understanding of Humanitarian Pause in May 2000. The purpose of the pause was twofold—to allow desperately needed humanitarian aid to reach Acehnese conflict victims and to prompt the confidence-building necessary for further negotiations between the government and GAM (Huber 2008). The Humanitarian Pause established a Joint Committee on Security Modalities (JCSM) to reduce tensions and violence; a Joint Committee of Humanitarian Action (JCHA) to coordinate distribution of funds for humanitarian development; and a Security Modalities Monitoring Team (SSMT) designed to evaluate implementation of the accord and investigate violations (Aspinall and Crouch 2003). These committees benefited immensely from their connections and

collaborations with NGOs and aid workers (Darmi 2008). For example, JCHA efforts were greatly aided through the NGO humanitarian volunteers network while the NGO human rights monitoring network “effectively became SMMT’s eyes and ears in the field” (Darmi 2008). However, NGOs and student activists sharply criticized committee structures for their lack of enforcement capacity and absence of mechanisms to punish violaters (Aspinall and Crouch 2003). These groups called upon international assistance to monitor the Pause, but, after allowing UN involvement in East Timor (a move perceived by Jakarta as facilitating their independence), the government sought to exclude international involvement in Aceh as much as possible (Aspinall and Crouch 2003).

### *Collapse of Talks and Resumption of Violence*

In July 2001, the new Indonesian president, Megawati, offered special autonomy for Aceh province (Huber 2008). The GAM rejected this offer and soon after, attacks on ExxonMobil gas facilities prompted Jakarta to withdraw from the pause and embark on security operations against GAM militants (Huber 2008). Attempting to bring the disputants back to official peace talks, the HDC used Megawati’s offer as a basis for further negotiations. However, as this was the government’s maximum offer and, at best, could be considered a minimum requirement for GAM acceptance, the HDC was limited to managing joint government and rebel committees throughout 2002 that focused on further implementation of the Pause and expanded humanitarian operations in Aceh (Huber 2008). One unintended consequence of these activities concerned gains in GAM’s international status. Another is that the Pause held throughout talks and gave the GAM a chance to rebuild (Huber 2008).



During this round of facilitated dialogue, the HDC arranged meetings between prominent Acehnese civil society leaders and GAM generals in Geneva (Aspinall and Crouch 2003). The first of these, held on August 19, 2002, was deemed a success after Imam Suja convinced the GAM to continue with the peace talks (Aspinall and Crouch 2003, p. 30). Sensing the benefit of consultation with Acehnese civil society, the HDC announced it would pursue an All Inclusive Dialogue after an agreement was reached to find consensus on implementation and encourage public acceptance (Aspinall and Crouch 2003). However, the TNI was quick to denounce the move (Aspinall and Crouch 2003). In December 2002, GAM and government leaders signed the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) in Geneva (Huber 2008). According to the CoHA, the HDC would monitor implementation of the agreement alongside Indonesian security forces and GAM monitors while footing the bill and providing administrative and logistical support (Aspinall and Crouch 2003).

The HDC reported that in the first two months of the agreement the average number of civilian deaths dropped from 87 to 12 (Aspinall and Crouch). Nine members of GAM were killed compared to 102 per month prior to CoHA's signing while only four TNI troops lost their lives versus 45 per month (Aspinall and Crouch 2003). The reduction in violence and increases in freedom of movement were short-lived, however, after peace zones established by CoHA became launching pads for Acehnese independence rallies (Huber 2008). On May 18 2003, peace negotiations in Tokyo collapsed after the GAM rejected government demands for acceptance of autonomous status, immediate disarmament and abandonment of calls for independence (Aspinall and

Crouch 2003). Within hours, President Megawati declared “all out war” in the province and placed it under martial law (Aspinall and Crouch 2003).

*Round Two of Peace Talks in the Aftermath of the 2004 Tsunami*

Fighting raged until 2004 when Political Security Minister Yudhoyono secretly renewed a commitment to dialogue. He dispatched Vice President Kalla to contact GAM rebels in the field and exiled generals in Sweden (Huber 2008). Instead of turning again to the HDC, the Indonesian government called upon the services of Conflict Management Initiative—a Helsinki-based NGO led by Finland’s former president, Marti Ahtisaari (Huber 2008). Approximately two months after these back channel talks commenced, disaster struck. On December 26, 2004, a massive tsunami swept along the Acehese coast, carrying away at least 165,000 people (Gaillard et al 2008). The army was in control of the coastal strip at the time and sustained severe damage (Gaillard et al 2008). Harris (2010) asserts that this loss prompted the TNI to declare a unilateral ceasefire towards GAM. Before the tsunami, two INGOs were working in Aceh; within weeks that number blossomed to over 500. The common theme of their activities centered upon “disaster diplomacy”—using the symbolism of NGO relief activities to emphasize the need for renewed talks (Gaillard et al 2008). That said, “much of the relief effort was conducted as if the conflict did not exist” in terms of who received care and attention and how much (Gaillard et al 2008, p. 517). Indeed, GAM and TNI forces focused their concern to relief activities, at times even cooperating with each other (Gaillard et al 2008). As talks were secretly ongoing, the tsunami served as a powerful catalyst to the process, but not the sole determinant of the ensuing peace agreement (Gaillard et al 2008).

In late January 2005, the first of five rounds of peace talks commenced in Helsinki. At first, President Ahtisaari spent his time shuttling between GAM and government leaders; however, over time the disputants were brought into the same room to speak face to face (Kingsbury 2006). Round one of the talks successfully delayed full on GAM acceptance of “special autonomy” and instead the parties agreed to “explore whether the ‘special autonomy’ concept could offer an opportunity to reach an end of the conflict” (Kingsbury 2006, p. 32). Round two of the peace talks kicked off to civil society criticism at the lack of transparency coming from Helsinki and questioning the legitimacy of the GAM to speak for all Acehnese (Kingsbury 2006). Recognizing the validity in these criticisms, the Olaf Palme International Center organized a series of meetings between GAM and civil society representatives, squelching criticism almost immediately (Kingsbury 2006). The first task assigned to civil society actors brought into the process was to “socialize” the term “self-government” among the Acehnese people and gauge whether it was more palatable than “special autonomy” (Kingsbury 2006, p. 45).

Shortly before round three of peace talks, Kingsbury (2006, p. 64) (who does not pretend to offer an impartial account of his experiences during the Helsinki peace process) mentions that the HDC attempted to “wrest control” back from the CMI. Launching their own “Aceh Framework Agreement”, apparently HDC officials shopped their proposal around secretly between GAM and government officials. However, by this time, GAM had its own plan of action and, moreover, both parties had grown accustomed to meeting face to face, rendering HDC’s style of shuttle diplomacy unnecessary. Round three additionally featured NGO activity outside the peace process in that the Support

Committee for Human Rights partnered with London-based Indonesian human rights organization, Tarpol, to hold a peacebuilding workshop in Jakarta (Kingsbury 2006).

During round three, GAM officials selected civil society representatives to debrief on developments in the talks thus far and to outline their positions on independence, self-government and democratization in Aceh (Kingsbury 2006). The secret meeting with civil society took place in Stockholm. Acehnese civil society leaders took the opportunity during their stay in Sweden to appeal to INGOs to condition reconstruction, rehabilitation and recovery funding upon a ceasefire (Askandar 2005).

The discussion surrounding the establishment and character of local political parties during round four started off promising, but, under pressure from Jakarta, government negotiators returned to their hard-line position, threatening the survival of talks (Kingsbury 2006). On July 8, 2005, GAM officials hosted their second civil society meeting that included a number of participants who had been exceedingly critical of GAM activities. Kingsbury (2006, p. 110) notes: “A major concern was the lack of a referendum in the proposals being considered in the talks, this claim having been deleted early in the process as an impediment to the talks’ progress. There was also concern about the inclusion of wider social issues, including education, health and women’s rights. The issue of referendum was unable to be overcome...however, there could be support for such political expression in the future.”

The final round of peace talks again got off to a good start with the issues of political parties settled to everyone’s relative satisfaction. However, the talks were nearly derailed at the last possible minute over Indonesia’s insistence on a larger than previous expressed contingent of TNI security forces remaining in Aceh (Kingsbury 2006). The

third and final meeting with Acehnese civil society was held on August 8, 2005 in Selangor, Malaysia. Over 230 individuals were in attendance as GAM officials encouraged them to promote acceptance of the agreement among the public (Kingsbury 2006).

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed in Helsinki on August 15, 2005. Most notably, it established a right to Aceh based political parties, reserved 70 percent of natural resources revenues for the province, declared amnesty for all GAM fighters and mandated the release of all political prisoners within 15 days. The agreement also established the Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM) composed of EU and ASEAN forces to monitor implementation of the MoU. The AMM was tasked with the following: a) monitor the demobilization of GAM and decommissioning of its armaments; b) monitor the relocation of non-organic military forces and non-organic police troops, c) monitor the reintegration of active GAM members; d) monitor the human rights situation and provide assistance in this field; e) monitor the process of legislation change; f) rule on disputed amnesty cases, g) investigate and rule on complaints and alleged violations of the MoU, and h) establish and maintain liaisons and good cooperation with parties (MoU 2005).

#### *Implementing the Memorandum of Understanding in Aceh*

Following the signing of the MoU, Acehnese civil society organizations facilitated public dialogues on sensitive issues, such as the potential fracturing of Aceh (Darmi 2008). Additionally, they attempted to frame spoilers of MoU as criminals subject to the rule of law rather than perpetrators of political violence whose activities cry out for retaliation (Darmi 2008). A few development based NGOs provided loans for ex-

combatants to start their own businesses while others held job-training workshops. Darmi (2008) asserts that civil society played an integral role in drafting the Law on Governing of Aceh through public consultation forums and lobbying for a formal democratization agenda.

Despite these measures of progress, Aspinall (2008) notes that civil society actors had little success in promoting human rights protections and sound mechanisms for transitional justice in the MoU. Initially pleased with the provisions establishing a human rights court and a truth and reconciliation commission, civil society in Aceh is now disappointed with its ineffectiveness (Aspinall 2008). Overall, the MoU allocates insufficient resources to human rights issues while the AMM practices excessive caution in human rights abuse investigations. Moreover, local NGOs believe their talents would be put to better use through capacity-building efforts and significant engagement on behalf of the AMM (Lahdensuo 2010). Not everyone finds the arrangement disappointing. Lahdensuo (2010) asserts that most civil society views the AMM very positively and as an impartial and professional actor. Indeed, two practitioners close to the negotiations argue that it is preferable that NGOs do not play a large part in the monitoring mission (Ahtisaari 2008, Feith 2007). Their reasoning for this is unclear, though perhaps it could be related to perceptions of bias among informal actors. In any case, the Aceh peace process represents a success story for Track II diplomacy and efforts at peacebuilding. That said, the analysis section following the three case studies will take into consideration alternative explanations for peace in Aceh, such as the involvement of strong international state actors and intergovernmental organizations.

## **Mindanao**

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Spanish settlers landed in the Philippines islands and began a systematic campaign to colonize and convert indigenous peoples to the Spanish Crown and Catholicism, respectively (Uppsala 2008b). However, the Spanish could never quite quell the southern islands of the Mindanao region, nicknaming the ethnic groups their *Moros* after their religious arch-enemies in the Ottoman Empire (Uppsala 2008b). The *Bangasmoros* remained a distinct group from that first encounter with the West, through American imperial adventures and subsequent Philippine independence in 1946 (Uppsala 2008b).

Eager to get rid of potentially disruptive idle segments of the population, the newly created government encouraged migration to the south. This policy resulted in thousands of Christian settlers arriving in Mindanao *per week*, understandably triggering significant social conflict (Uppsala 2008b). The government put out these fires throughout the 1960s, but the murder of 28 Muslim recruits at the hands of Christian soldiers in 1968 proved too much for the long marginalized Muslim population to bear. The Mindanao Independence Movement quickly evolved into the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and by 1975, the civil war that would take at least 120,000 over its thirty-six year course and counting was well under way (Uppsala 2008b).

The MNLF achieved initial political gains through the 1975 Tripoli Agreement. Under pressure from the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), leaders for the MNLF accepted the Tripoli proposal establishing autonomy in 13 of 23 provinces (Uppsala 2008b). The agreement, while promising, failed to address other important

issues, such as land redistribution (Uppsala 2008b).<sup>3</sup> Therefore, breakaway factions such as the MNLF-Reformist and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) resumed hostilities relatively quickly after the signing of the agreement.

Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, the Mindanao conflict gained international prominence due to the widespread practice of kidnapping by insurgents, namely the Abu Sayef group (Uppsala 2008b). After President Ramos' election in 1992, he renewed a commitment to dialogue with the MNLF (perceived as the most likely partner in peace) (Harris 2010). Indonesia, Libya and the OIC conducted meetings in Tripoli and, after four years of negotiations, MNLF and GRP officials signed the Agreement for the General Cessation of Hostilities (AGCH) on July 18, 1997 (Harris 2010). The MILF entered into negotiations with the GRP shortly after the AGCH signing; however, in 1999 the GRP launched an "all out war" against all Moro groups, prompting the MILF to leave peace talks (Harris 2010).

By 2001, peace was once again on the table as President Estrada called upon Malaysia to serve as facilitator to the talks.<sup>4</sup> With Malaysian persuading, the disputants formally recognized that their goals were not necessary incompatible in the 2001 Tripoli Agreement. Attempts to establish a *Bangsamoro* homeland without undermining Philippine sovereignty continued intermittently. Early 2003 saw heavy fighting after President Arroyo halted negotiations (due to MILF's lukewarm appraisal of the GRP's "Draft Final Peace Agreement). The conflict simmered in the latter half of that year, with

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<sup>3</sup> For example, on the island of Basilan, 71 percent of the population is Muslim. However, Christians own 75 percent of arable land while ethnic Chinese Filipinos control 75 percent of trade.

<sup>4</sup> Similar to mediation, "facilitation is closely associated with the 'good offices' concept in which a third party, acting with the consent of the disputing states serves as a friendly intermediary in an effort to induce them to negotiate between themselves without necessarily offering the disputing states substantive suggestions of settlement" (Harris 2010, p. 333, quoting Bledsoe and Bozcek 1987)



ceasefires holding for most of 2004. Arroyo asked Malaysia to increase their commitment to the talks by serving as mediator (Harris 2010). Attempts to define self-governance for the Mindanao region proved extremely problematic as disagreements arose over who and to what extent would have control over foreign affairs, defense and monetary policy (Harris 2010).

Finally, the parties signed the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MoA-AD) on July 27, 2008. The MoA-AD defines the geographic extent of Moro homelands, allocation of natural resources and broadly outlines governance of the homeland (Harris 2010).<sup>5</sup> In August 2008, however, Arroyo cancelled the MoA-AD amid civil society and Congressional outcry that the agreement conceded too much (Harris 2010). Siding with the administration, the Supreme Court declared the agreement unconstitutional in October 2008 and talks once disintegrated (Harris 2010). Despite the MILF being the only active fighting force in the region at the time, violence reached its highest levels in five years (Harris 2010). In 2009, exhausted from the fighting, the MILF announced a unilateral ceasefire and returned to negotiations with the government. The Abu Sayef groups remains active; the conflict remains unresolved.

### *Civil Society in the Mindanao Peace Process*

Rood (2005) describes civil society efforts throughout the Mindanao peace process as “hyperactive”, but disjointed. Cagoco-Guiam (1999) characterizes civil society as factionalized along religious and political groupings and mostly intra-communal—serving on Muslim or Christian interests, with great difficulty (and little effort) in

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<sup>5</sup> the MoA-AD states that: “The Parties agree that the BJE shall be empowered to build, develop, and maintain its own institutions, inclusive of civil service, electoral, financial and banking, education, legislation, legal, economic, and police and internal security force, judicial system and correctional institutions, necessary for developing a progressive Bangsamoro society, the details of which shall be discussed in the negotiation of the Comprehensive Compact” (2008).

transcending religious or ethnic bases (Rood 2005). Muslim groups are largely underrepresented; most civil society groups have a Christian affiliation of some sort (Harris 2010). Mincode, a caucus of Mindanao development NGOs reports a membership of over 500 organizations (Mincode 2011). However, regions with the greatest relative Muslim population report disproportionately small levels of NGO membership and activity (Rood 2005). Table 2 from Rood (2005, p. 10) illustrates this phenomenon:

<b>Table 2: Geographic Spread of Mindanao NGOs</b>	
Location	MinCODE Members
Region 9 (Zamboanga peninsula)	65
Region 10 (northern Mindanao)	189
Region 11 (Davao area)	180
Region 12 (western Mindanao)	38
Region 13 (Caraga)	47
Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARRM including Cotabato City)	20
Table directly from Rood's (2005) survey of MinCODE members, p. 10	

As demonstrated in the collapse of the 2008 MoA-AD, civil society can have a powerful “spoiler” effect on negotiations between Moro separatists and the GRP. Declaring that “peace at any price is not worth it,” civil society groups did not commit violence against proponents of the peace process *per se*, but “provided the rationale and moral justification for such acts” (Barnes 2006, p. 20). Despite a “frantic” focus on interreligious dialogue, coalition building, community organizing and media advocacy, Rood (2005) asserts that civil society actors were given only a “token role” in the 1996

peace negotiations and beyond. Despite that, there are instances of success. For example, in November 2000, Mindanao Force—a coalition of NGOs, business councils, and elected public officials—urged then Vice President Arroyo to name an all-Mindanao peace panel for consultations with the MILF (Rood 2005). One month into her sudden presidential administration in February 2001, she did exactly that as part of her “all out peace policy” (Rood 2005, p. 7). The Mindanao Peace Panel included civil society representatives that were allowed to attend the July 2001 peace talks. They could not sit in on the actual negotiations, but were free to meet with officials during lunch and coffee breaks (Rood 2005). Unfortunately (but perhaps unsurprisingly), their presence had little effect on the discussions and failed to prevent the talks from collapsing. Also present were local government officials which, Arguillas (2003) reports, drowned out proposals from activists. GRP’s extensive reliance on back-channel negotiations during and after this round of negotiations with MILF further weakened the representatives’ bargaining power. However, despite these challenges the Mindanao Peace Panel is credited with helping to persuade the GRP to establish yet another ceasefire in August 2001. Activists also lobbied MILF officials to consider the civilian population when launching guerilla operations. In April 2002, civil society representatives convinced MILF leaders to abandon their use of landmines and sign the “Deed of Commitment under Geneva Call for Adherence to a Total Ban on Antipersonnel Mines and for Cooperation in Mine Action” (Rood 2005). Landmines remain an ongoing issue in Mindanao—in June 2010, Brig. Gen. Jose Vizcarra announced that the “government and MILF teams will jointly move in tracking down and defusing landmines and unexploded devices to ensure that people in Central Mindanao will be out of harm’s way” (Wakefield 2010).

Nodes of civil society focused around religious groups, business councils, domestic and international INGOs and organizations dedicated to advancing gender equality during post-conflict reconstruction (Rood 2005). These groups interact with each other amid networks that are constantly shifting and realigning. These groups, while supporting the peace process in general, frequently clash with each other and with other nodes, unfortunately minimizing their impact on policy outcomes. For example, in terms of the big picture, “Akbayan believes in reform of the current system, Bayan Muna advocates complete replacement of the capitalist system, the MNLF aims for an ethno-nationalist solution to Muslim problems, while the MILF seeks an Islamic solution” (Rood 2005, p. 14). As Rood (2005) illustrates, two of the main rebel groups in this case study—the MNLF and MILF—have NGO arms to advance their goals among the wider public. While this is perhaps inevitable, “one thing hindering civil society’s ability to influence governmental policymaking lies it is (real or alleged) political bias” (Rood 2005, p. 34). It is this bias that makes NGOs a frequent target of Philippine government criticism or worse—harassment by security services. However, different nodes and types of activities receive greater tolerance from the government and citizenry alike than others.

Given the Philippines colonial legacy, the Catholic Church plays the most active role in religious civil society, though other Christian denominations, particularly Mennonite conflict research organizations, engage in the peace process as well (Rood 2005). Among these groups, Peace Advocates Zamboanga (PAZ) plays a big role in inter-religious dialogue and organizing peaceful protests. Rood (2005, p. 17) cites “poverty, discrimination, oppression and marginalization” as leading contributors to the

relatively weak state of Muslim civil society. These dynamics create feedback loops in which donors fund the established, bigger NGOs (which happen to be affiliated with Christianity) while Islamic societies struggle to bridge the funding gap. He also suggests that, within this segment of Mindanao's population, there is a "lack of ideological space" for Muslim civil society groups. "To the extent that a shared identity as Muslims is strong (as the data indicate), then religion and armed struggle may fulfill the need for collective public action between the private sphere and the state in place of civil society organizations" (Rood 2005, p. 18). The Mindanao Business Council has attempted to create new avenues for inter-faith dialogue and understanding through partnerships with local imams. Recognizing the disproportionate impact of conflict on Muslim communities, the Council "has been actively working in such areas as *halal* food certification and Islamic banking" as a way for these areas to make a quick(er) recovery (Rood 2005).

As previously alluded to, the NGO sector in Mindanao is perceived by both the citizenry and the government as biased and sympathetic to one cause or another. International NGOs such as Catholic Relief Services and Oxfam have invested a considerable amount in their domestic partners—far more than just providing funds, these NGOs are "involved in providing training, preparing training materials, conducting workshops, etc." (Iyer 2004, p. 5).

Santiago (2011) provides an overview of "gender equality" NGOs operating in Mindanao. The GRP was the first country in Asia to develop a "National Action Plan" to implement UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 addressing the unique impacts of armed conflict and sexual violence on women. Additionally, the MILF

announced that they would soon include two female advisors on their panel for peace negotiations (Santiago 2011). Encouraged, women in Mindanao have formed the “We act for 1325” network and, in character with overlapping civil society nodes, the “Mindanao 1325” network (Santiago 2011).

*Civil Society Activities—Interfaith Dialogue, Peace Zones, and Monitoring Ceasefires*

Since the late 1970s, the National Council of Churches as well as Catholic NGOs have attempted to downplay the national label for the Philippines as the “only Christian Country in Asia” in favor of recognizing the sizable Islamic population in Mindanao (Rood 2005, p. 21). In 1992 the GRP created the National Unification Commission (NUC). This institution encouraged several locally organized workshops and meetings to bring Christians and Muslims together under one roof. The strict hierarchy of the Catholic Church contrasted with the decentralized character of Islam has made for differences in levels of representation during interreligious dialogue. Rood (2005, p. 23) asserts that, given most Christians self-segregation from Muslim communities, “to the extent that one hopes to change attitudes, it is Christian attitudes that must change.” Finally, while the aims of interreligious dialogue are noble and definitely supportive of a long-term peace, in the short term, the meetings fail to address alternative (but highly relevant) *secular* separatist movement in Mindanao.

Another church-led area of peacebuilding concerns the establishment of “peace zones” throughout the Mindanao region. During various periods of hostilities, local communities, with the help of a regional bishop (or NGO official), drafted agreements to present to the GRP and rebel forces, asserting their right to a peaceful existence within set territorial bounds (Iyer 2004). Jumping on board, the GRP established the Special Zone

for Peace and Development (SZOPAD) in the 1996 peace agreement with the MNLF. However, President Estrada angered civil society organizations when he converted the peace zones into forced depositories for people internally displaced by the fighting (Iyer 2004). Local representatives worked to distance themselves from these government-run peace zones and keep the process as bottom-up and connected to individual communities as possible (Iyer 2004). In terms of success of these agreements, the results are mixed. In some circumstances, the zones of peace has conceivably prevented conflict as they give some space to sort out individual instances of violence—whether they were related to MILF / MNLF activities or feuds between families (obviously stemming from different motivations, but, in the past, the latter was frequently conflated to the level of separatist activities by GRP security forces) (Rood 2005, Iyer 2004). During fighting between GRP and Moro separatists, it appears that the combatants have taken some care to respect their agreement with communities (given that both, but especially MNLF and MILF forces, have an interest in being perceived as “honorable” or “the good guys” among the public) (Iyer 2004, p. 40). However, when strategic or tactical challenges conflicted with their obligations under the agreement or the violence escalated nearby--like near the Nalapaan Space for Peace in Pikit in 2003, for example—the agreement failed to keep war out. For the fourth time (Iyer 2004, Rood 2005). As with the interreligious dialogues, however, there is considerable evidence suggesting that zones for peace support long-term peace. Both Rood (2005) and Iyer (2004) find that, within these zones, citizens report higher levels of trust among themselves as well as outside communities. Additionally, the periods of peace have allowed space for economic development—as Rood (2005)

documents a jubilant café owner proclaiming that his coffee shop remained at capacity throughout the night after the zones of peace agreement was signed.

Providing similar benefits as the locally established peace zones, but with (sometimes) regional security have been the periodic ceasefires throughout the Mindanao conflict. Somewhat surprisingly, NGOs and other civil society actors have played a big role in monitoring these agreements and reporting violations. These groups were involved in the drafting and implementation of Local Monitoring Teams. When those groups failed to disclose the results of their monitoring, NGOs such as Bantay Ceasefire stepped in with transparent reporting of their own, independent, investigations (Rood 2005). Again, as with the peace zones, NGO monitoring has played an integral role in distinguishing organized violence from familial clashes, thereby preventing the collapse of ceasefires at certain times (Rood 2005).

Despite these efforts, civil society organizations have had little to no effect on public opinion, which largely is opposed to autonomy for Mindanao (Rood 2005). With elites, they have had a little more luck in advocating for specific policy proposals; however, general calls for peace are usually overshadowed by strategic or self-interested considerations of elected officials and rebel group leaders. One reason why these groups might be so frequently stymied concerns their poor relationship with media outlets in the Philippines. Journalistic accounts of the Mindanao conflict tend to be quite conservative and rarely report on civil society perspectives of a particular event (Cagoco-Guiam 1999). As several of the groups covered in this case study (Mindanao 1325, Mindanao Business Council) have Facebook accounts, there is hope that technological advances in communications will help these groups target their message to the public.



## **Sri Lanka**

Amid Sri Lanka's independence from British colonial rule in 1948, the Tamil ethnic group to the country's north and east worried that they would be second class citizens in the new state (Uppsala 2008c). The Tamils had a few years respite as the Sinhalese worked on consolidating power in the new state, but by 1972, they were comfortable and confident enough in their status as the majority ethnic group to declare Sinhala the official language and Buddhism the official state language of Sri Lanka. Naturally, this did not sit well with the Tamils—who already had difficulties getting a job or education in Colombo (Uppsala 2008c). In May 1976, early leaders of the separatist released the Vaddukoddai Resolution. This manifesto declared the northern and eastern provinces of Sri Lanka to be the separate state of Tamil Eelam and established the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) to bring this independence movement to fruition (Uppsala 2008c). Up to 100,000 people were killed in the ensuing 33 year civil war.

The early stages of fighting featured a plethora of fragmented rebel groups, but infighting quickly resulting in the LTTE emerging as the torchbearer for the Tamil independence movement. With support from the Tamil-led state of Tamil Nadu in India, the LTTE became one of the world's most formidable guerilla armies (Uppsala 2008c). The group had the capacity to wage conventional warfare from its own small air force and navy in addition to the traditional guerilla fighting tactics characteristic of most modern civil wars (Harrison 2002). Perhaps the most incredible feature of the LTTE was the existence of their super elite fighting units, the Black Tigers. The Black Tigers

purportedly launched over 300 suicide missions, several of which achieved their military goals in catching Sri Lankan forces unaware while at their base (Harrison 2002).

In addition to the organizational capacity and support for suicide cadres, another highly unique feature of the Tamil Tigers concerns their use of female combatants. Women make up approximately thirty percent of LTTE forces, including the Black Tiger units (Gunawardena 2006). The move to include female fighters began in the late 1980s, more due to operational necessity than any loftier aspirations for gender equality or support for feminism. Even among the female fighters themselves, it appears they are driven from ideological, nationalist and personal motivations more so than a desire for complete equality with men (Gunawardena 2006). While Gunawardena (2006) cites widespread rape of Tamil women during fighting in the late 1980s / early 1990s (during the Indian Peacekeeping Mission) as a contributing factor in their increasing militancy, she maintains that there is a little evidence linking rape as a tool of war to the decision of women to embark on suicide missions for the Tamil cause.

India, long sympathetic to demands for Tamil independence, facilitated the 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka Accord that granted more autonomy to the northern and eastern provinces in exchange for LTTE demobilization and demilitarization (Marasinghe 1988). India offered to provide a peacekeeping force to support and protect the LTTE during disarmament; however, the Tigers, not fully comfortable the terms of the agreement, soon turned on the Peacekeeping forces (Uppsala 2008c). Unfortunately for the Tigers, taking on both the Sri Lankan and Indian forces at the same time proved too much to handle and by 1989, LTTE leaders accepted a ceasefire and promised to give up their guns and transform into a political party. The promise to enter politics was not a lie *per se*, but the

manifestation of this was surely not what the Sri Lankan government had in mind. In 1990, Tiger rebels launched the Second Eelam War and quickly secured the entire Jaffna peninsula (Uppsala 2008c). The People's Front of Liberation Tigers, the Tiger's "political party", provided public service and essentially converted the peninsula into a de facto state until 1995.

Fighting continued until 1994, when the parties returned to the negotiating table and established a ceasefire. Talks stalemated though and, in retaliation, LTTE naval forces ambushed Sri Lankan navy boats, destroying the ceasefire before it even had a chance to get off the ground (Uppsala 2008c). This phase of the fighting, known as the Third Eelam War, comprised the most violent phase of the conflict. The government adopted a harsh "war for peace" strategy and finally retook Jaffna in 1996.

By 2000, the Tigers once again found themselves on the ropes and declared a unilateral ceasefire. Sri Lankan forces continued fighting, but secretly reached out to Norway to facilitate talks. Norway delivered a Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) agreement in 2002 and convinced the LTTE to accept autonomy rather than full independence. The CoH established the Sri Lankan Monitoring Mission comprised of Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, Danish and Icelandic monitors. After years of criticism as being simultaneously too close to Tamil Forces and biased against them, the SMM closed its doors in 2008 (by that point a whisper of its former monitoring capabilities) (Secretariat for Coordinating the Peace Process 2010). Similarly, the CoH was not to last; however, as the Tigers accused the government of delaying reconstruction efforts in the Tamil provinces. The tsunami further deteriorated relations; unlike Aceh, the tidal wave disproportionately hurt

Tamil rebels instead of military forces and the relief effort was uncoordinated and, in some instances, counterproductive (Gaillard et al 2008; Harris 2006).

The Fourth Eelam War of 2006 involved extensive use of Claymore mines against soldiers patrolling the Tamil provinces and indiscriminate civilian targets (including several children) in Colombo and surrounding countryside (Integrated Regional Information Networks 2008). The Sri Lankan government banned journalists from the country and frequently criticized international humanitarian organizations, thereby obfuscating the extent of repression and civilian casualties from the international community (Uppsala 2008c). Norway unsuccessfully attempted to arrange talks in Geneva in July 2006, but relations were so poor between the combatants that the meetings never came to fruition (Uppsala 2008c). In April 2009, the Sri Lankan government rescinded its consent to Norway serving as a facilitator for talks after the Norwegians arranged a phone call between a Tiger military operative and a humanitarian aid organization seeking access to northern Sri Lanka (Agencies 2009). Less than a month later the fight was over for the Tamil independence movement—President Mahinda Rajapakse declared the end of the civil war on May 19, 2009 and twenty four hours later, the LTTE admitted defeat in acknowledging the death of their founder, Vellupillai Prabhakaran (Thottam 2009).

#### *Civil Society in the Sri Lankan Peace Process*

“In Sri Lanka we don’t have civil society, only uncivil society” (Orjuela 2003, p. 199). Orjuela (2003) claims that she frequently hears this phrase during interviews with Sri Lankan activists and intellectuals. She attributes this to the extreme polarization of Sri Lankan society between the Sinhalese and Tamils. Like the Mindanao conflict, the

composition of Sri Lankan civil society is lopsided in favor of the majority group. Sinhalese nationalist and Buddhist groups serve as spoilers to the peace process due to their frequent protest activities and avid support of the military campaign to suppress the Tamil independence movement (Orejuela 2003). There is a extreme dearth of groups devoted to transcending ethnic boundaries. Furthermore, INGOs make up a substantial part of Sri Lankan civil society— while this is not necessarily negative, in Sri Lanka, Orejuela (2003) asserts that their presence reinforces citizen passivity. The authoritarian culture / prevailing government structures of Sri Lanka influence the daily operations of INGOs (generally more bureaucratic organizations than their grassroots counterparts anyway) and the few local NGOs (Orejuela 2003). The history and prevalence of top-down rule leaves little room for a sense of agency at the individual level as a Tamil activist living in Jaffna reports: “LTTE people prepare to go for war; we can’t do anything about that. We give our opinion about peace. But we don’t say ‘Stop the War’” (Orejuela 2003, p. 200). The obstacles facing Tamil civil society are legion. The Sri Lankan government views Tamil activism with suspicion, extreme feelings of distrust of the Tamil people characterize Sinhalese perceptions, and, finally, the Tigers themselves frequently stamp out alternative opinions as they claim to represent the will of the Tamils alone (Orejuela 2003).

Despite these forces operating against a vibrant civil society, a small contingency of peacebuilding groups have gained a foothold in the debate (Orejuela 2003). A civil society rally marking International Human Rights Day in 1994 drew over 40 NGOs and thoughts and activists to the streets of Colombo (Orejuela 2003). Leaders compiled appeals for peace that were later sent to the government and LTTE officials. In February

1995, the National Peace Council of Sri Lanka launched its inaugural meeting. The umbrella group of peace and conflict resolution organizations focused on training and advocacy and ignited a growing interest in peace work among local groups. However, support withered with repeated collapses in peace talks during the late 1990s—most civil society groups, Orejuela (2003) reports, supported the government’s subsequent “war for peace” strategy. Consequently, it appears civil society groups took a step back and shifted their focus to building trust and understanding between the Sinhalese and Tamil peoples (Orejuela 2003). For example, in 2001 the Center for the Performing Arts in Jaffna brought a troupe of Sinhalese performers to the peninsula for performances and training workshops for Tamil dancers. Other groups brought Sinhalese women to camps for internally displaced Tamils; interviews suggest that seeing the conditions first hand and talking with the victims of conflict made a powerful impression (Orejuela 2003). Orejuela (2003) asserts that these activities had a tangible impact—following LTTE attacks on Sinhalese civilians in a village just east of a Tamil province, citizens refrained from indiscriminate retaliation; a shift from past reactions to similar attacks.

Civil society actors, most notably a Christian group that held an influential Round Table Conference in 1983, also attempted to push elites for the resumption of negotiations, constitutional reforms allowing for some degree of Tamil autonomy as well as democratic changes within the central government (Bastian 1999; Orejuela 2003). These actors, however, were working against the constraints of Sinhalese nationalist parties that had frequently served as spoilers to previous attempts at achieving peace. Bastian (1999, p. 33) notes that “the other central concern [of these groups, in addition to pushing for peace and respect for human rights] was the work at the ideological level

which questioned some of the dominant myths of Sinhala nationalism.” However, this challenge was very quickly put down by Sinhalese nationalist civil society groups and the media, which declared the critical questions “a conspiracy to undermine the Sinhala nation” (Bastian 1999, p. 33).

While the Sri Lankan conflict never captured the attention of the international community held by other conflicts of greater geopolitical value (from a cynic’s perspective), Bastian (1999) argues that the high point (at least until the 2004 tsunami) of international involvement occurred between 1983 and 1987 (during the Indian Peacekeeping Force period). During this time, the UN Commission on Human Rights passed several resolutions against the Sri Lankan government, but this condemnation did not translate into greater international legitimacy for the Tigers or Tamil aims (Bastian 1999). The UN Development Program (UNDP) worked to subcontract projects to local civil society organizations (Desilva and Ramiah 2007). Towards the latter years of the conflict, the UNDP established District Review Boards comprised of UNDP officials, local civil society representatives and NGOs to discuss and develop UNDP projects in that district (Desilva and Ramiah 2007). Harris and Lewer (2002) document Oxfam’s attempts at engagement with local civil society and domestic development NGOs through their “Relationship Building Programme.” They note that the establishment of this program marked a shift in Oxfam’s integration of development and peacebuilding. Previously, Oxfam had engaged mostly through international lobbying on behalf of its local partners—pushing for international campaigns and agreements against the use of landmines in warfare, for example (Harris and Lewer 1999, p. 6). The early days of

Oxfam's experiment in Sri Lanka were labeled as the "Conflict Reduction Programme"<sup>6</sup> and focused on three objectives: 1) improving the conflict reduction and peacebuilding skills of local organizations and average citizens, 2) fostering greater trust and understanding among and between communities and ethnic groups; and 3) supporting policy changes within the national government that contribute to reduced conflict and a sustainable peace. Similar to the UNDP approach, Oxfam established District Advisory Groups to work on using development projects to support peacebuilding activities. Additionally, the INGO produced a documentary covering their efforts—a rare attempt at changing widely held negative perceptions of both peace and international organizations within media outlets (Harris and Lewer 2002).

Mitigating the impact of Oxfam and other similarly minded INGO efforts are the anti-NGO sentiments that prevail among public and elite perceptions of the peace process; Peace Brigades International reports that three thousand protesters descended upon the NGO Forum on Sri Lanka in 1995 with the intent to disrupt the conference (Peace Brigades International 1995). These attitudes even extend past the end of the civil war. In March 2011, the Sri Lankan government announced it was launching an "investigation into the funding sources of the National Peace Council" (Asian Human Rights Commission 2011). The government appeared mystified that the National Peace Council would need to continue operations since the war was "over." Countering the government's bewilderment at the necessity of operations "serving the interests of foreign powers", the National Peace Council noted the complete lack of reconciliation

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<sup>6</sup> The program was later relabeled the "Relationship Building Programme" because the phrase "conflict reduction" was deemed too contentious for the Sinhalese public that a) supported government efforts at eradicating "Tamil terrorists" and b) were extremely suspicious of INGO operations, deeming their activities "foreign meddling" that warranted attacks, such as 2001 grenade attacks on Save the Children and Oxfam offices (Harris and Lewer 2002, p. 9).



measures in the northern provinces after 2009 (Perera 2011). The National Peace Council reported its concern at the neglect of reconciliation as recently as June 2011, warning that “the ghost of the LTTE” could yet haunt the government (Perera 2011).

### *Impact of Civil Society Involvement*

Overall, Orejuela (2003) argues that these types of peace and trust building activities have been too small scale and infrequent to have a significant impact on the peace process in Sri Lanka. Society on the island has been so decimated by the consequences of war that among average citizens the focus must be on day to day survival rather than aspirations for a goal as lofty as peace. Orejuela (2003) reports that groups frequently provided lunch and transportation in order to increase attendance at peace events. The absence of democratic structures among domestic and international NGOs leaves little hope for accountability and transparency to ensure that limited resources are spent efficiently. Finally, public opinion polling suggests that a deep gap in understanding “the other” exists among both the Sinhalese and Tamils (Orejuela 2003). In terms of cooperation with international organizations, these partnerships flourished after the 2004 tsunami, but, unlike Aceh, the relief effort in Sri Lanka was uncoordinated and unevenly distributed, again mitigating the impact of Track II efforts (Harris 2006). Harris (2006) asserts that NGO efforts in the wake of the 2004 tsunami “congested” space for effective humanitarian assistance, let alone engage in “disaster diplomacy” as Gaillard et al (2008) reports occurred in Aceh. By the end of January 2004, more than 300 INGOs were in operation along the Sri Lankan coastline (including the 75 organizations that were working in the country prior to the tsunami) (Harris 2006). Unfortunately, less than half of those organizations registered with the government’s

Centre for National Operations Coordination Center, though, given the government's prior hostility to international organizations, this is perhaps understandable (Harris 2006). Consequently, however, aid shipments flown in on a daily basis disappeared from the airport's tarmac without record of where it was being delivered and by whom. INGOs proved eager to find local groups to serve as distribution networks for aid. The influx of money and resources meant that little consideration was given to the track record of local organizations, instead groups were pressured to take the resources, whether they could use them or not. As one local director reported: "We are forced to accept funds we don't have the capacity to utilize because if we refuse we will lose face [with their beneficiary constituency] and other local NGOs will take both the money and our people anyway" (Harris 2006, p. 5).

Despite being flush with money and aid shipments, age-old rivalries over territory, partners and projects divided the NGO community and distracted the operations from recognizing the peacebuilding potential in the wake of the disaster (Gaillard et al 2008). In other situations, Harris (2006) reports that the aid given was actually counterproductive to alleviating the humanitarian crisis that prompted the donation in the first place. For example, the Government of Taiwan offered 50,000 tons of rice to Sri Lanka, despite the fact that tsunami affected areas, fortunately, did not face food security issues. The influx of free rice threatened to dampen prices Sri Lankan farmers received at market, thereby making it harder for them to repay loans taken out on their harvest. When asked if Sri Lanka should politely reject Taiwan's sincere or self-interested offer, an official affiliated with the relief effort replied, "No, at times like these we cannot afford to look a gift horse in the mouth" (Harris 2006, p. 3). The Sri Lankan case of post-

tsunami humanitarian relief serves as a sharp warning to international NGOs and bilateral donors to adopt “conflict awareness” procedures for the next natural disaster, but, unfortunately, for the Sri Lankan-Tamil peace process, the relief dividend delivered to the Aceh negotiations never transpired (Gaillard et al 2008).

## CHAPTER VI

### ANALYSIS

The Aceh, Mindanao and Sri Lankan conflicts illuminate the role civil society and NGOs can play in shaping (and spoiling) prospects for a sustainable peace. Additionally, process tracing each conflict has shown how these actors interact with other important catalysts and constraints for the peace process. For example, the level of attention and commitment by the international community serves as an alternative explanation for civil war outcomes; however, comparing international responses to Aceh and Sri Lanka after the 2004 tsunami demonstrates how domestic and international NGOs and other civil society actors also fit within this explanation. Together, the three investigations provide some answers for my hypotheses, despite the somewhat limited generalizability of these findings. Furthermore, it is useful to depict and compare patterns of civil society involvement during each phase of conflict. Comparing levels and patterns of engagement provides a framework for an indexed measure of civil society engagement that could eventually be used for quantitative examinations of the research questions posed in this thesis. Finally, comparative analysis and evaluation of my hypotheses yield paths for both additional research and practical application.

Several of my hypotheses center around the expected impact of “higher levels of domestic and INGO involvement” in the peace process. From my qualitative

investigation, I have concluded that both the Aceh and Mindanao conflicts represent high levels of Track II engagement in the peace process, based upon sheer frequency and varying types of activities that domestic and INGOs have coordinated. The Sri Lankan civil war represents a low level of NGO engagement. Orjuela's (2003, p. 200) interviews capture the depressed sense of individual agency among civil society activists: "...We give our opinion about peace, but we don't say 'Stop the War.'" While Aceh and Mindanao experienced high levels of NGO engagement in the peace process, the experiences (and impact) of activists differed considerably. The Mindanao conflict is plagued by a fractured civil society. These groups, while highly active, often run counter to one another's goals, thereby cancelling the other's impact. Additionally, from my investigation, it appears the Mindanao conflict received less international attention than the Aceh conflict. This, I argue, is a function of two unique characteristics of the Aceh conflict. First, most obviously, the devastation of the 2004 tsunami captured the world's attention and motivated a sustained INGO relief effort. Those groups then transferred support for disaster relief to diplomatic pressure to resolve the conflict. Second, even before the tsunami, GAM leaders embarked on a sustained effort to gain international recognition and legitimacy. Part of the reason why the Indonesian government agreed to let the HDC and CMI mediate their dispute was to avoid conferring greater international legitimacy to the GAM. Tables 4, 5, and 6 provide a visual illustration of the varying degrees of NGO activities in each dispute. Those Tables will be discussed in detail

during the evaluation of hypothesis six (expectations about the timing of domestic and INGO intervention and impact of sustained NGO engagement in the peace process).

It is prudent to make sure that my theory concerning the ways in which NGOs gain leverage in peace negotiations holds up to the empirical record. Only then can evaluate each individual hypothesis. Through my qualitative investigation, it appears that international actors frequently rely on NGOs to report from the field on the status of the peace agreement, human rights violations, etc. However, this unique capability of local actors does not always translate into greater credibility or influence among Track II actors in other issue areas. One exception to this general trend would be the coordinate NGO response in Aceh to engage in “disaster diplomacy” and urge the peace talks forward (Gaillard et al 2008). However, while civil society actors played an instrumental role in monitoring ceasefires between GRP and Moro separatists in the Philippines, their activities and influence in this capacity did little to advance their standing among a public in firm opposition to peacebuilding activities.

In terms of providing a voice to the wars’ most affected citizens, NGOs played a strong role in this regard and used these narratives to advance specific policy proposals, such as Oxfam’s lobbying for landmine bans. These connections to local populations have helped Track II organizers mobilize the international community and domestic society, with an important caveat: public opinion is a powerful constraint on the effectiveness of peace protests and rallies. For example, the burgeoning peace movement in Sri Lanka was squashed following a swift reversal in public opinion towards support for the government’s “war for peace” strategy. While NGO and civil society leaders can have influence, it is fragile—public opinion is quite resilient to change in both the Mindanao and Sri Lankan conflicts. While Sri Lankan civil society peacebuilding efforts are dominated by a top-down approach, Philippines Track II actors have

embraced grassroots organizing. This trend is most apparent in the establishment of Peace Zones. While the zones of peace have been frequently overrun by combatants in times of collapsed talks or intense fighting, the sense that Philippine citizens can declare their village a conflict-free zone represents a huge difference in mentality between Mindanao and Sri Lankan citizens. This greater sense of individual agency, I argue, has encouraged Philippines civil society to continue peacebuilding efforts, despite numerous setbacks. By contrast, the collapsed peace movement in Sri Lanka in the late 1990s never quite recovered. In conclusion, I found strong evidence for the theoretical underpinnings of my hypotheses; however, it is prudent to recognize the limits of influence these actors have in the peace process—an active, strong role in one arena does not always translate into greater influence across the entire peace process. Table 2 briefly indicates the level of support found for my six hypotheses. I elaborate on the results below.

<b>Table 3: Support for Hypotheses</b>	
H1	Some Support
H2	Some Support
H3	Undetermined / No Support
H4	Some Support
H5	Strong Support
H6	Strong Support

*H1: Conflict Management attempts in states with higher levels of domestic and INGO involvement (D / INGO) will be more likely to end in a partial or full peace agreement than in states with low levels of Track II involvement.*

I find support for my first hypothesis, but with a few additional conditions. First, as the Mindanao case in particular illustrates, it is not enough to have high levels of civil society involvement. The civil society must actually be a) civil and b) representative. After all, several civil society organizations urged the Supreme Court to declare the 2008 peace agreement unconstitutional because “peace at any price is not worth it”—meaning that the agreement ceded too much autonomy to the Mindanao provinces. The underrepresentation of Muslims and complete absence of Lumads (non-Muslims indigenous to the Mindanao region) bears ill for peacebuilding efforts. Christian organizations are tasked with either serving their own interests or attempting to reach out to other faiths, but without a clear understanding of how to bridge the gap among communities. Likewise, in Sri Lanka, Sinhalese nationalist groups have on several occasions spoiled attempts at peacebuilding and outreach to the Tamils in the north. Coordinated international involvement is also important to the peace process, as the facilitation of talks between GAM and civil society representatives by the Olaf Palme International Center illustrates.

The Aceh case meets these conditions and also features the unique characteristic of INGO mediators. The motivations behind HDC and CMI involvement in the conflict differ from those found within the literature (better suited to foster a peace agreement that is sustained, etc.). In this case, it appears that the HDC and CMI were brought in by the Indonesian government to minimize the risk of GAM officials gaining even more international legitimacy (Aspinall 2007, Kingsbury 2006). Second, lingering resentment towards UN involvement in the East Timor conflict excluded that organization as a possibility to mediate peace negotiations. While the HDC and CMI deferred to the wishes of the combatants about the role of civil society involvement in the meetings, the activists were lucky to have a friend in GAM officials (Kingsbury 2006). The



INGO mediators facilitated talks between GAM leaders and activists, but did not push the combatants to allow activists into the negotiations (Kingsbury 2006). However, this coordinated effort to make their demands known yielded returns, such as when Imam Suja convinced GAM officials to continue with peace talks (Kingsbury 2006). By contrast, civil society involvement in Mindanao peace negotiations was limited to access to officials during lunch and coffee breaks. This uncoordinated, informal approach, combined with the extensive use of backchannel negotiations between MILF and GRP officials, mitigated any impact civil society activists had on the talks (Rood 2005).

*H2: Peace agreements signed in states with higher levels of D / INGO involvement will be more likely to endure than peace agreements signed in states with lower levels of D / INGO involvement.*

As a brief evaluation of peace agreement endurance in each conflict, I find that the 2005 Memorandum of Understanding in Aceh is an enduring peace agreement, as is the 1997 General Cessation of Hostilities Agreement between the Philippine government and the MNLF (though that agreement failed to resolve the Mindanao conflict). Sri Lanka did not experience any enduring ceasefires or peace agreements before the Tamil Tigers' defeat in 2009.

I find support for this hypothesis with the conditions outlined in my discussion of hypothesis one and the introduction of a third: security guarantees. The Aceh case illustrates that the backing of the international community is a powerful component explaining the durability of a peace agreement. Non-state actors can complement this support from strong states and international organizations; however, there appears to be no substitute for Walter's (2002) "third party security guarantees." I argue that the Philippines ceasefires have been greatly aided by local NGO monitors, which minimizes the vulnerability of MILF forces to abide by the

agreements. However, their involvement has not been sufficient to prevent the breakdown of the agreement during tense and stalled negotiations.

*H3: Peace agreements signed in states with higher levels of D / INGO involvement will be more likely to include institutions such as transitional justice mechanisms, power-sharing pacts, and specific protections for human rights than peace agreements signed in states with lower levels of D / INGO involvement.*

I do not find support for this hypothesis. However, through my case selection, I ultimately relied upon an n of 1 to evaluate this hypothesis, so further testing is sorely needed. The Aceh-Indonesia case featured relatively high levels of civil society involvement (through meetings with GAM representatives) and yet the final Memorandum of Understanding was quite weak on human rights and transitional justice institutions (Aspinall 2008). This finding could be an outlier given the apparent satisfaction with vague human rights language in the MoU at the time of the signing. That is to say, I found little evidence that Acehnese civil society pushed ardently for strenuous human rights provisions—their main focus instead seemed to be reaching a sustainable peace agreement granting significant autonomy to the Acehnese people (Kingsbury 2006). Kingsbury (2006) relays discussions about post-conflict power-sharing between GAM and government officials; however, civil society appears to have been completely excluded from these negotiations (as they took place in the frantic hours just before an agreement was officially reached). I found little evidence of civil society representatives pushing for transitional justice institutions and no institutions were firmly established in the 2005 Memorandum of Understanding, besides a vague reference to the establishment of a Human Rights Court that, as of the time of this writing, has yet to come into being. Furthermore, it is difficult to compare the Acehnese MoU with Cessation of Hostilities agreements signed at various points in the

Philippines and Sri Lankan conflicts since such a huge contingency of those civil societies are against peace in the first place, leaving them little incentive to advocate for protections for Moros or Tamils. Given the support found in the academic literature for the role of committed actors in seeing transitional justice mechanisms enacted in peace agreements, qualitative investigation of additional peace processes is required for a better evaluation of this hypothesis.

*H4: Domestic NGOs with similar missions and agendas will be more likely to partner and cooperate with like-minded INGOs during the peace process than INGOs of diverging philosophies or purposes.*

I find support for this hypothesis, but with interesting observations that do not exactly fit within this expectation. First is the practice of cross-partnering among NGOs. For example, Oxfam, a development organization, constructed an extensive program aimed at conflict reduction activities. This required partnerships with local groups that were engaged in peace and conflict resolution activities and less focused on economic development. Additionally, in a crisis with few overarching structures for coordination, as in the aftermath of the Sri Lankan tsunami, it appears that INGOs distribute the vast influx of resources as quickly (and indiscriminately) as possible. Most of the time however, it appears that INGOs and domestic groups match themselves based upon similar interests or purposes. For example, Catholic Relief Services International most frequently partnered with Catholic community organizations in the Mindanao conflict (Rood 2005). This is not always a good thing; however, as both the Mindanao and Sri Lankan conflicts could potentially benefit from a greater number of groups that attempt to transcend ethnicity or religion.

*H5: Peace processes that experience high levels of D / INGO involvement, but little cooperation and coordination among state and other Track II actors will be less likely to experience sustained peace outcomes than cases that have both high levels of D / INGO involvement and cooperation with conflict managers.*

I find very strong support for this hypothesis. The Aceh conflict featured coordination between international Track II actors and civil society. Additionally, it appears that Acehnese civil society remained on the same page and communicated their goals to the GAM officials at the Helsinki talks. I found only one instance of dissent from a few groups challenging GAM legitimacy at the talks, but their criticism was quickly mollified when GAM officials agreed to hear their concerns in person (Kingsbury 2006). The Mindanao case fits the expectation of hypothesis five perfectly. The conflict is characterized by high levels of involvement from several civil society groups, but they are not operating in a coherent fashion. Often their opposing agendas mitigate their impact.

*H6: Conflicts that feature sustained NGO engagement across all phases of fighting—active armed hostilities, peace negotiations, and peace agreement implementation—will be more likely to experience sustained peace than conflicts with little or inconsistent NGO engagement.*

I also find strong support for hypothesis six. Tables 3, 4, and 5 depict the types of civil society engagement at different phases of each conflict. The main takeaway point from comparison between these tables is the importance placed on early intervention into the conflict. In both the Mindanao and Sri Lankan conflicts, NGOs did not really try to engage the public in supporting peace until the conflict had waged for awhile, locking in hardliner opinions. Additionally, it is important to consider how these activities were structured. The tables (and my theory) do not address the differences in impact between top-down and bottom-up approaches.

The Aceh case featured both approaches, with international NGOs like the HDC and CMI guiding the peace process and pulling in local actors while local civil society engaged in peacebuilding in the field (and under threat of attack from security forces). The Mindanao case is primarily a bottom-up endeavor, especially considering the active role local groups have played in establishing peace zones and fostering inter-faith dialogue. By contrast, Sri Lankan society is noted by top-down, authoritarian structures in most institutions—leaving most citizens feeling powerless to end the conflict.

The effect of these activities appear to be additive. Civil society activists in Aceh remained engaged in a wide array of activities during the entire peace process and the 2005 Memorandum of Understanding is the only peace agreement that remains in force (that actually resolved the dispute). However, I maintain that some of these tools are more valuable than others. For example, “mobilizing the public” appears to be a necessary component of NGO impact. Philippine civil society participated in a fair number of activities to encourage peace (albeit later in the conflict than Acehnese activists); however, their inability to shift public opinion towards support for the 2008 Cessation of Hostilities agreement led to its downfall. Likewise, in the Sri Lankan civil war, most of the public and even some Sinhalese and Buddhist nationalist civil society organizations supported fighting. Tamil peace activists could not find a space to present alternatives, coming under suspicion from both the government and the Tigers. Another type of activity that could conceivably be a necessary or sufficient condition for peace is efforts towards demobilization and reintegration of combatants. In the Aceh conflict, I found evidence of NGOs assisting with this effort (Aspinall 2008), however, in Sri Lanka, this does not appear to be a priority. A longer time frame for analysis is needed; however, to see if there is a correlation between demobilization / reintegration activities and sustained peace.

**Table 4: Types of NGO engagement during all conflict phases in Aceh**

	Outbreak of Armed Hostilities	Peace Negotiations	Peace Agreement (PA) Implementation
Advocacy / Pressure Disputants	X	X	
Mobilize Public	X	X	X
Peace Workshops / Peace Education	X	X	X
Human Rights Documentation	X	X	X
Facilitate Dialogue	X	X	X
Consultation / Technical Expertise	X	X	X
Economic Development		X	X
Monitor PA Implementation			X
Assist with Combatant Demobilization and Reintegration			X
Facilitate Democratic Transition / Elections			X

**Table 5: Types of NGO engagement during all conflict phases in Mindanao**

	Outbreak of Armed Hostilities	Peace Negotiations	Peace Agreement (PA) Implementation
Advocacy / Pressure Disputants		X	X
Mobilize Public		X	X
Peace Workshops / Peace Education		X	
Human Rights Documentation		X	X
Facilitate Dialogue	X		
Consultation / Technical Expertise		X	
Economic Development	X		
Monitor PA Implementation			X
Assist with Combatant Demobilization and Reintegration			
Facilitate Democratic Transition / Elections			

**Table 6: Types of NGO engagement during all conflict phases in Sri Lanka**

	Outbreak of Armed Hostilities	Peace Negotiations	Peace Agreement (PA) Implementation
Advocacy / Pressure Disputants			
Mobilize Public		X	X
Peace Workshops / Peace Education		X	X
Human Rights Documentation		X	
Facilitate Dialogue		X	
Consultation / Technical Expertise			
Economic Development		X	
Monitor PA Implementation			
Assist with Combatant Demobilization and Reintegration			X
Facilitate Democratic Transition / Elections			

In terms of the four step process demonstrating the use of Transnational Advocacy Networks, I find a general pattern of conformity to my expectations. With Step 1 (domestic groups reach out to INGOs to push for third party conflict management while mobilizing the domestic public), I found that there is more emphasis (or at least progress) on the international half of the step. More groups reach out to INGOs and establish TANs than focus on the domestic side of things, as the public opposition to the peace process in Mindanao and Sri Lanka indicates. During Step 2 (INGOs use TANs to raise awareness of the conflict situation and establish partnerships with local NGOs), it appears that INGOs most often engage directly with the conflict and establish deep partnerships with local actors rather than focus on reporting to other organizations and states in the international sphere. Appeals for third party involvement occur, of course, but the focus does not seem to be on this objective. Step 3 (involvement in peace negotiations) seems to be the exception rather than the rule.

Even in the Aceh conflict, local civil society representatives had a total of three meetings with GAM forces and were not permitted in the actual negotiations. Given both LTTE and Sri Lankan government suspicion of Tamil civil society, I found no evidence of consultation with these groups at all during peace negotiations. Finally, in Step 4 (domestic and INGO involvement in implementation of peace agreements), I found that these actors adopt a supplementary role, such as partnering with state monitors in the Aceh Monitoring Mission or establishing transparent reporting on ceasefire violations through the Bantay ceasefire group. NGOs seem to play a much more active role in economic development and, in Sri Lanka at least, are the only actors involved in reconciliation and reintegration of ex-combatants (Perera 2011).

## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUSION

From the analysis of my qualitative investigation, it is now possible to offer a few answers to the larger research questions of this thesis. The same caveats about generalizability of findings mean, however, that I cannot conclusively determine the impact of Track II engagement in civil war peace processes. Yet I find strong support in the affirmative.

Across the Acehnese, Mindanao and Sri Lankan conflicts, civil society activists have conducted activities and workshops to push for peace in varying degrees. The Aceh conflict featured the most concentrated NGO and civil society involvement, both in terms of early and sustained engagement and in the variety and frequency of activities. Yet there are unique features of the Aceh conflict (mediated by INGOs with Finnish, EU and ASEAN support, cohesive civil society community whose input was welcomed by GAM representatives, and a well-implemented disaster relief effort). These unique attributes become necessary conditions for Track II impact on the peace process when compared to the Mindanao conflict, which had similar levels of NGO activity (albeit later in the conflict cycle), but lacked the features of the Acehnese case.



I draw most of my theory generating lessons from the Mindanao and Sri Lankan conflicts. The collective sense of futility about ending the war in Sri Lanka created a self-fulfilling prophecy that, in part, explains the Sinhalese annihilation of the Tigers in 2009. Furthermore, the case is noted by the relative absence of INGO involvement until immediately after the 2004 tsunami, when a surge of INGO involvement swept the region. The relief effort, however, was poorly managed and civil society activists were unable to build momentum for peace negotiations—a missed opportunity as the post-tsunami environment in Aceh illustrates. The Mindanao conflict also refines my theory in demonstrating the ineffectiveness of Track II efforts when the civil society community is fractured and unrepresentative of the broader public. The following three takeaway points from this thesis illustrate the conditions under which Track II efforts are most likely to have an impact on peace negotiations.

1. *A cohesive and representative civil society community that is firmly connected to the public at large.*

In both the Mindanao and Sri Lankan conflicts, the civil society community featured a preponderance of a certain type of group when compared to the population at large. In Mindanao, Christian organizations make up the majority of civil society organizations and, at times, these groups fuel bias towards the Muslim *Bangsamoro* community rather than work to change perceptions and promote peace (Rood 2005). Groups that have tried to change public opinion towards supporting the 2008 Cessation of Hostilities agreement were unsuccessful, drowned out by the outrage over the government's concessions to the MILF (Rood 2005).

In the Sri Lankan case, civil society is dominated by Sinhalese and Buddhist nationalist groups that strongly opposed peace at times during the 30-year conflict (Orejuela 2003). Tamil activists were excluded almost entirely from the peace process. The biggest lesson from both of

these conflicts is the need to strongly engage with the public in order to generate a successful peace movement. Public opinion proved surprisingly resilient to change, despite the incredible costs of these wars on society at large. While civil society organizations are, in part, a function of public support and sanction for their activities, there is room for the relationship to run the other way: activists can strategically shift public opinion through coordinated efforts, such as the “disaster diplomacy” campaign in Aceh.

2. *INGO involvement in the peace process is well-coordinated and supported by states or regional organizations.*

As weaker actors in the international system, INGOs rely on states and regional organizations to maximize the impact of their activities and increase the credibility of their promises to combatants, third-party mediators, and local NGOs. In the Aceh conflict, the HDC and CMI were supported by the Finnish government and the EU and ASEAN committed forces to monitor the 2005 Memorandum of Understanding. Without this support, it is difficult to imagine whether GAM forces would have accepted the government’s offer of autonomy after being burned so many times before (Aspinall 2007; Kingsbury 2006).

Keck and Sikkink (1998) present a bottom up driven model of changing state behavior in that the first step features local NGOs reaching out to the international community. This is intuitive, given local groups informational advantages over INGOs and local capacity to influence conflict outcomes. However, the Sri Lankan experience demonstrates the need for INGOs to perhaps take a more proactive approach in engaging in conflicts. While this is not a substitute for local activity, perhaps INGO attention before the 2004 tsunami would have fostered more effective relief efforts. In conflicts where civil society is unable or unwilling to reach out to the international community for peace, perhaps INGOs should seek local groups out

to build partnerships and dispense resources rather than waiting to be called upon. Given the limited resources of INGOs and the potential of domestic backlash, the feasibility of such a top-down peace movement requires further investigation.

3. *Track II involvement begins during the early stages of involvement and is sustained through a variety of activities over the course of the peace process.*

The resistance of public opinion to peace efforts in the Mindanao and Sri Lankan conflicts was perhaps caused by the absence of civil society efforts in the beginning stages of conflict. Without leadership offering alternatives to war, public opinion hardened and supported retaliation for rebel attacks (Orejuela 2003, Rood 2005). The Aceh conflict, by contrast, featured a peace movement from the beginning. This, combined with the representativeness of the civil society community, created a close relationship between activists and the public. GAM leaders were well aware of this relationship and asked activists to try out a new Indonesian word for autonomy (emphasizing “self-determination”) on the public to gauge their reaction before proceeding with the next round of the 2005 negotiations (Kingsbury 2006). Of all the activities listed in Table 1, early engagement in the peace process is most vital to the creation of a sustained peace effort. Activities that connect civil society organizations to the public and mobilize opinion in support of peace are the next most important consideration. Local NGOs are best suited for these types of activities, but INGOs may serve as effective conduits between the public, combatants and mediators as well.

### *Index of Civil Society Involvement*

Using my findings from these case studies and broader takeaway points, I have attempted to develop a reliable and valid measure of civil society engagement in a peace process based on observable criteria. The index is composed of seven dimensions affecting civil society activities.

Each measure can be thought of along a spectrum of low-medium-high. The first dimension is the sheer number of NGOs and civil society organizations operating in a particular region or country. This count variable could be conducted by examining the membership roles of umbrella organizations or networks, such as MinCODE in Mindanao. Once compiled, this count could be determined as low, medium, high relative to similar conflicts, other conflicts within the region, etc.

The second dimension of my measure concerns the coherence of civil society—how many cleavages are there between groups. For example, the Mindanao conflict is characterized by a highly fractured civil society—several groups bump heads due to ethnic, religious or ideological differences. This dimension should also be interacted with a sense of representativeness among civil society groups. Fractured though it is, Philippine civil society is also disproportionately representative of Christian Filipinos. By contrast, Sri Lankan civil society is small, but heavily comprised of “uncivil” Sinhalese nationalist and Buddhist groups. Determining coherence and representativeness of civil society could be conducted through study of organizational mission statements, interviews, and public opinion polling. Related to this measure is consideration of the relationship between civil society organizations and media outlets. Conflicts with state-controlled or biased media operations pose constraints on the ability of civil society representatives to get their message out. An interesting tangent to this measure is an investigation on the use of social media by domestic civil society groups.

The fifth element of determining civil society engagement concerns the level of support and cooperation between domestic civil society organizations and the international community (not just INGOs). Similarly, it is important to consider combatant attitudes towards Track II actors—GAM representatives proved quite receptive to civil society suggestions while the LTTE

viewed Tamil activists as a threat to their legitimacy as “representatives of the will of the Tamil people” (Orejuela 2003). The final element of this measure of civil society engagement considers the pattern of activities as depicted in Tables 2, 3, and 4. Early involvement in the peace process appears particularly important for sustained peace outcomes.

In conclusion, this study has illuminated the conditions under which civil society actors are most likely to have an impact on the peace process and the peacebuilding activities they employ to ripen a conflict for peace. In doing so, my qualitative investigation has raised paths for further research. In order to expand the generalizability of my results, I would like to replicate this study in another region. Additionally, I would like to employ survey and interview methods to add further nuance to my findings. Finally, the project has sparked tangential research questions relating to the role of social media in peacebuilding activities. Additionally, I think it would be very interesting to examine organizations that engage in cross-partnerships with NGOs of other specialties, such as Harris and Lewer’s (2002) in-depth study of Oxfam’s Conflict Reduction Program. Ultimately, I would like to develop a systematic way to measure civil society involvement in peace processes to offer insights to practitioners engaged in third party conflict management.

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VITA

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Scope and Method of Study: The purpose of this study was to systematically examine the impact of non-governmental (NGO) and other civil society organizations on the creation, implementation, and durability of a peace agreement following a civil war. A most similar systems comparative study of three conflicts in Southeast Asia—Aceh, Indonesia; Mindanao, Philippines; and the Tamil separatist war in Sri Lanka—examined the level of impact of NGO and other civil society activities on the peace processes in those conflicts.

Findings and Conclusions: NGOs and civil society organizations employ a variety of techniques to shape the peace process toward an enduring agreement. Civil society in a region that is representative of the broader public and unified in its aims for peace is most likely to have an impact on the peace process. Early and sustained engagement with the public and international community leverages NGO influence over peace negotiations. Partnerships between international NGOs and local organizations also increase the likelihood that a peace agreement will be implemented and remain in force.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Dr. James M. Scott

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